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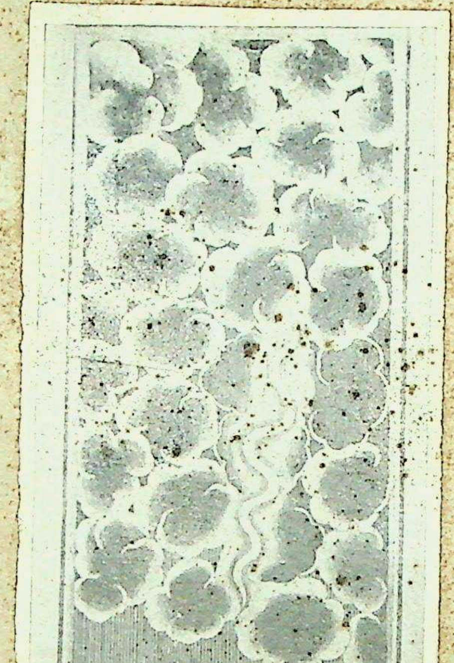

# LANDSCAPE IN INDIAN LITERATURE AND ART

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RADHA KUMUD MOOKHERJEE FOUNDATION LECTURES
UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW
FOR 1954 (2)

# LANDSCAPE IN INDIAN LITERATURE AND ART

*With 37 Illustrations and 3 Colour Plates*

पुस्तकालय, लखनऊ
1934
25.8.64
State Museum, Library

*By*

Professor O. C. GANGOLY

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF
LUCKNOW, 1963

704.954

Printed by Nibaran Chandra Das at the Prabasi Press Private Limited, 120-2, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Road, Calcutta-9 and published by the University of Lucknow.

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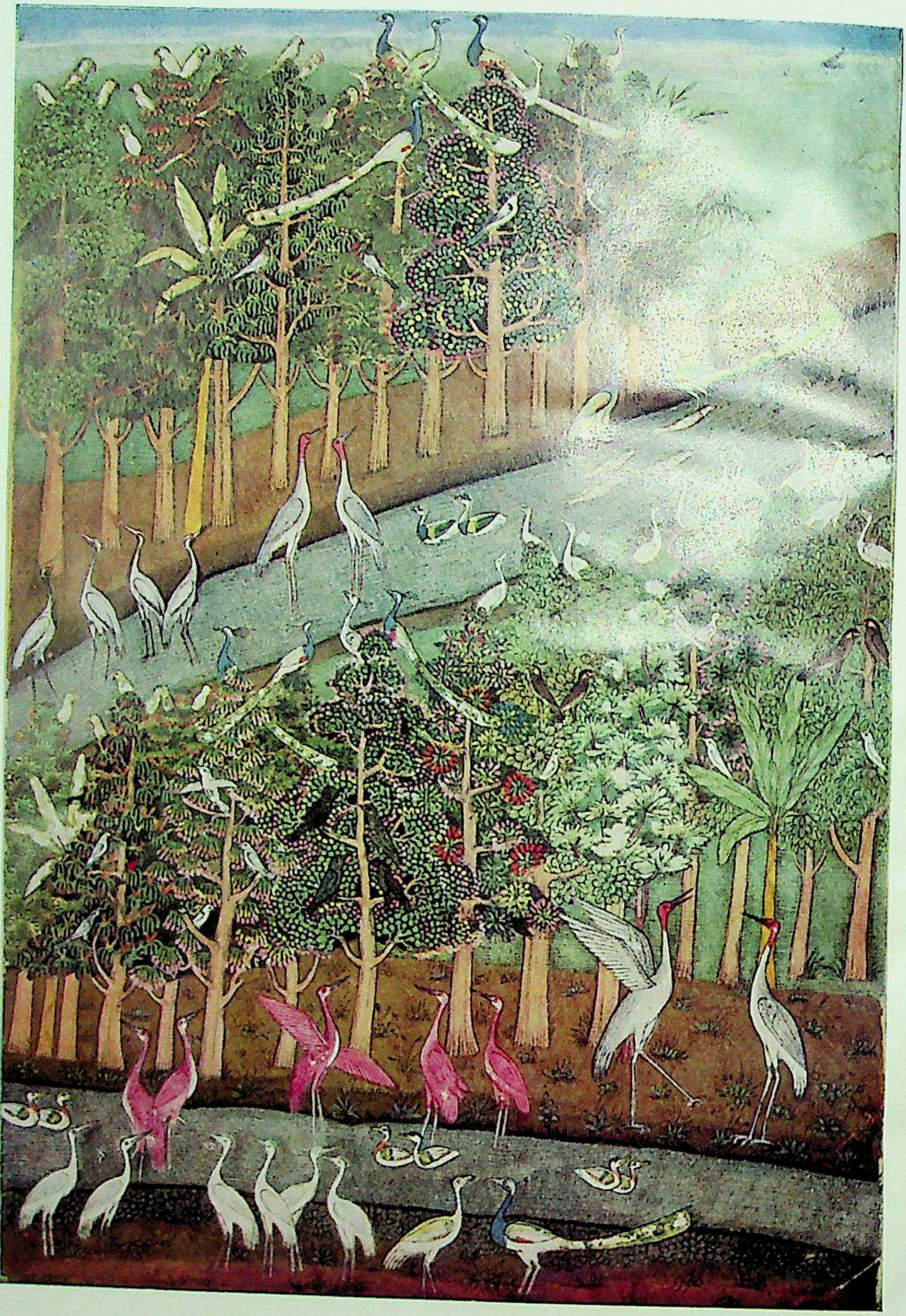

BIRDS IN WOODLAND

Courtesy—Prince of Wales Museum of Western India

# THE CALL OF THE UNIVERSE

*By Rabindra Nath Tagore*

ए विशाल विश्वे चारिदिक होते प्रतिकणा मोरे टानिछे ।
आमार दुयारे निखिल जगत् शतकोटि करे हानिछे ।
ओरे माटि तुइ आमारे कि चास्
मोर तरे जल दुइ हात बोड़ास्,
निश्वासे बुके पशिया बातास् चिर आह्वान हानिछे ।
पर भाबि यारे, तारा बारे बारे सबाइ आमारे टानिछे ॥

Translation :

In this limitless Universe every particle from all directions
is pulling me,
Millions of hands from the whole world are knocking at
my door.
O ! Thou Earth do thou have any yearning for me ?
O ! Water do thou stretch out thy hands for me ?
The air I am inhaling with every breath summons me by
perpetual calls
Those Whom I take as not my own, they are pulling me
again and again.

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# AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This survey of the history of Landscape Art in India is based on three Lectures delivered at the University of Lucknow under the Radha Kumud Mookherjee Foundation.—I am happy to record my grateful thanks to the Foundation for the courteous invitation to deliver these Lectures, and, for the opportunity to present a significant, but little known, phase of Indian Art.

The First Lecture is a summery survey of Landscape in European Art—and its late history which proves that Indian landscape Art was born long before Landscape Painting was known and understood in any stage of Western Art.

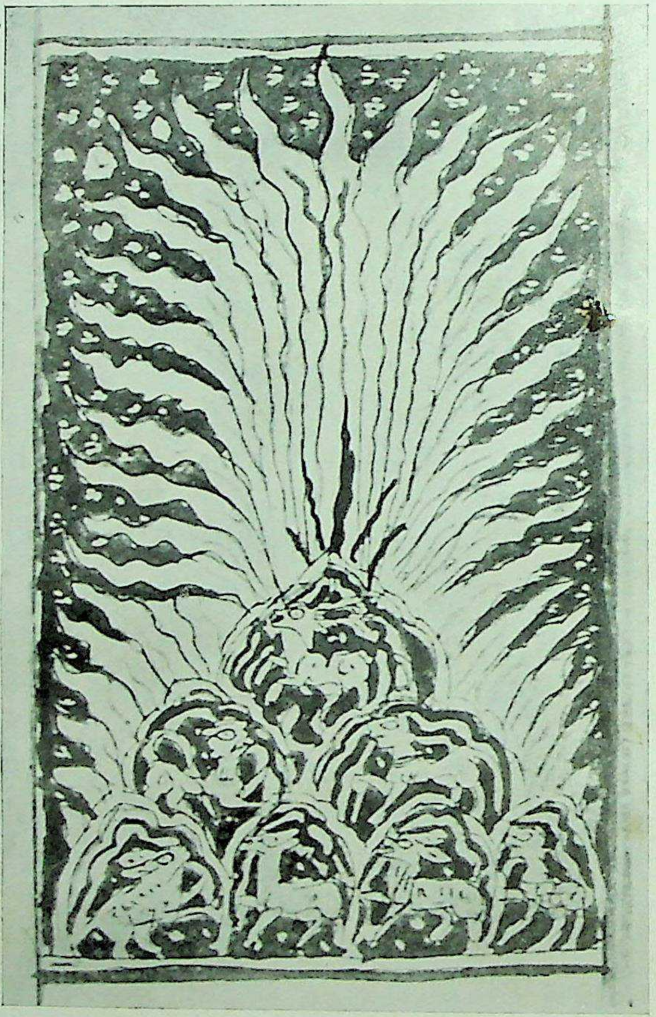
All the three lectures were profusely illustrated with lantern slides. It has not been possible to cite, here, all the illustrations with which the original lectures were demonstrated. The illustrations originally used for the First Lecture have been altogether omitted in this book. And, to minimise the cost of production, only forty examples to illustrate the Indian phase have been used here. I may however point out that the reduction in the number of my projected illustrations has not impaired or obscured the story of the evolution of Indian Landscape Art.

An explanation is due to readers for many references in the text (pages 48, 49—J. P. Gangoly, G. N. Tagore and I. M. Sen), to several illustrations not finally included in the work.

In conclusion I may state that as this work is a sort of pioneering work, it leaves scope for improvement which I leave to the future students of the subject.

O. C. GANGOLY.

2 Ashutosh Mukherjee Road,
Calcutta-20,
15th August, 1962.



(Frontispiece)
Mountain on Fire,
Vedic Motif,
Kalpasutra, page 22, p. 67.

## FIRST LECTURE :

## LANDSCAPE IN EUROPEAN ART

It is generally believed that Indian Landscape Painting is a nineteenth-century derivative, wholly inspired by contact with European Painting as a result of the direct influence and imposition of English Culture on Indians at the beginning of British Dominion in India.

But if we scan the pages of the history of European Painting, we are surprised to find that Landscape Painting is a comparatively very late development in European Art and that Landscape Painting was discovered and practised in Asia long before the introduction of European Painting in any part of Asia. To take a rapid survey of the history of Landscape Painting in Europe is essential for a proper realisation of the bearings and implications of the history of Indian Landscape Painting.

It is indeed true that Indian Landscape Painting did actually come in contact with some phases of European Landscape Art in the 17th century during the Moghul Period. But Indian Landscape Art was born and developed centuries before any contact with European Art and it developed independently on wholly original paths, long before Landscape Painting was understood in any phase of Western Art.

Yet the study of the history of Landscape Art in Europe will be useful for us in our study of Indian Landscape not only for the purpose of the demonstration of the late development of European Landscape but for the discovery of the general principles of Landscape Painting.

Now,—Love of Nature and Man's intimate communion with the beauties of natural forms, are as old as the history of human culture, but, in pre-historic art, the study and representation of human and animal forms long precede any attempt to represent the beauties of the mountains, the skies, and the vegetable world.

So that, it does not follow that the development of Love of Nature is immediately followed by any attempt to depict the beauties of natural scenes. The scenes of Nature were, for many milleniums, objects of mysterious reverance to the Primitive Man—and he was too much overpowered by the physical powers of Rain and Thunder, Sunshine, and Moonshine, the awe-inspiring phases of Natural forms, the mysterious wonders of the vegetable world, its trees, fruits and flowers to be able to contemplate on them—in an abstract manner. The sheer fertility of the Primeval Forests, their palatable gifts as well as their dangers and curses continued for ages to intrigue and baffle the human mind before any detached view could be taken of the beauties of Nature—leading to a contemplative conception of the Sky, the Earth, the Rivers and the Rocks,—as objects of beauty to be apprehended for their own sake, apart from the gift of Happiness and Misery that the powers of Nature for Good and Evil can bring to human life.

The fundamental fact of great importance for our subject is to realise that love and admiration of the powers and the beauties of Nature do not immediately beget the capacity to render the beauties of Nature in terms of the conventions of Landscape Art. So that even when appreciation of beauties of Nature finds expression in glowing descriptions in Literature, in Nature-Poetry, Travalogues and other forms of Descriptive Literature, the capacity to depict Natural Beauties in the technical forms of landscape does not yet come into existence. To put it in a more prosaic and practical formula, Landscape helps us, while seated indoors, to have a peep into the out-door life, to plumb the secrets of distant views, to soar into limitless extension of space before our gaze, to view the panorama of the Earth and of the Heavens which open before the eyes of Man as he gazes before him in search of the secrets of Nature.

Landscape, as we have said, helps one to peep into out-door life while actually seated indoors. St. Paul has, somewhere, happily expressed the position : "Seated he fares afar, recumbent, he goes everywhere."

Landscape is, therefore, a substitute for out-door life—which helps us to enjoy the beauties of out-door life—without stirring out of the four corners of our indoor shelters. Yet, the study and enjoyment of Landscape Art sometimes persuades us to leave the comforts of our sheltered corners in order to go out and directly taste the treasures and happiness of out-door life by a direct communion with Nature. Skilful Landscape Painting beckons to us to undertake the adventure of a long journey, far away from our homes and to travel over insurmountable hills and mountains or to penetrate into impenetrable forests in order to taste the beauties of Nature by a direct contact. If a copy of any phase of Natural Beauty is so attractive, how dynamic and thrilling must be a direct tasting of the gifts of Nature.

Like the skilful painter, the skilful poet, sensitive to the beauties of Nature, vies with the plastic Artist—to preach and to plead for the attractions of Nature which offer aesthetic delights in generous abundance.

As pointed out by John Ruskin, typical Homeric Landscape intended to be beautiful is composed of a fountain, a meadow, and a shady grove. This is well-illustrated in the Fifth Book of the *Odyssey* where, Mercury himself stops for a moment, though on a message, "to look at a landscape which even an immortal might be gladdened to behold".

In his vivid description of a 'blissful haunt,' an earthly paradise, Homer figures as a skilful pictorial artist drawing our attention to the living green of the groves, the glowing violets, purple clusters of the vines, and the vivid greens of the meadows, very like a painter with his palette bubbling with a rich array of colours.

But corresponding to such literary expressions of Nature-worship by Homer, there is no parallel representation of Landscape, in any phase of Greek plastic Art.

The Greek Artists' rendering of natural forms is almost exclusively confined to beauties of the human body.

It is not until we come to Early Christian and Byzantian Art in the 3rd or 4th century that we come to any representation of trees or rocks, even then, in Byzantine Art the figures of Saints predominate leaving no room for representation of natural scenes for their own sake.

### Renaissance School

To the general rule that Landscape does not very much figure in Renaissance Painting—we find a few exception here and there.

Thus in the painting by an unknown Florentine of the early 15th Century ( C. 1410 ) entitled : '*The Thebaid*' we have one of the earliest landscapes in Italian Painting.

But landscape in Italian Painting realy begins with Paolo Uccello ( 1420-1497 ) and Benozzo Gozzoli who were almost contemporary painters working in the early part of the 15th Century.

Uccello was the discoverer of the principles of Scientific Perspective, and, Vasari tells us how this painter used to sit up all night drawing plans and elevations of buildings and figures and trees receding in diminishing sizes according to the scientific principles of representing distance.

His manner of representing landscape is best studied in the famous battle-piece in the National Gallery, London, entitled : '*The Rout of San Romano*', a painting which he was commissioned to paint by Cosimo di Medici. Here there is no question of rendering a view of nature for its own sake but a presentation of a natural scene as a background to human activities.

A more peaceful atmosphere is suggested by Benozzo Gozzoli's presentation of a landscape on a more comprehensive scale in the rendering of a wide stretch of rocky sceneries in a crowded canvas punctuated by tall trees with long slender trunks, illustrating *The Journey of the Magi*. Here the foreground is crowded with the procession of riders marching in solemn state with their retinues. Gozzoli has introduced similar landscapes in his other paintings but nowhere with such an extensive view of distant rocky scene.

In the well-known masterpiece of the '*Deposition from the Cross*' by Perugino, the art teacher of Raphael, the emphasis is on the glory-telling composition of the crowd of figures in various moods and gestures hovering round the prostrate figure of Christ just brought down from the Cross. And the distant landscape with a series of slender trees with shadowy foliages on the rock is introduced as a minor feature in the composition. For the artist does not expect us to look at the landscape but to gaze at the poignant tragedy of the Sacrifice of Christ in the dramatic and graphic arrangement of the actors in the story posed in gestures of intense emotions. The sense of distance in the scenery in the background is suggested by different degrees of definition in depicting the trees. This manner of describing a landscape with feathery forms of trees was imitated by Raphael in several of his works. After the Florentines, the next contribution to landscape is made by the artists of the Venetian Schools chiefly by Titian and Georgione.

In the famous painting : *'Sacred & Profane Love'*, Titian attempts to meet the rival claims of Figure Painting and Landscape Painting with equal emphasis. The two figures leaning on the marble fountain at the centre no doubt monopolize our attention. But if we can ignore their claims to our attention we find that the artist has taken considerable pains to depict the many details in the Landscape background. But it was the great Venetian painter, Georgione ( 1482-1510 ) who was the first Italian to concentrate his attention in recording natural scenes with more emphasis than the Florentines.

In fact the first landscape in European Painting was painted by Georgione, the great Venetian.

But we find that in Renaissance Painting landscape had not yet reached the point where it could exist in its own right, without the justification of figures.

But landscape painted for its own sake does appear in the late phase of Renaissance Painting and most significantly in some of the works of El Greco ( 1545-1614 ). In his *'View of Toledo'*, we have a wonderful view of the city as seen against the background of heavy clouds undulating hills, rivers flowing through channels crossed by bridges and gateways, above all, by a profusion of trees, plants, verdures and grasses which fill the whole picture with distracting details which induce and agitated state of mind by emphatic contrasts of lights and shadows.

Outside Italy, under the influence of the Venetian Painters, both Velasquez in the South and Peter Paul Rubens in the North sometimes painted pure landscape.

But Velasquez's dominating interest was in the Art of Portrait-Painting and his landscape, interesting as they are,

are entirely subordinate to the presentation of his figure subjects.

After Velasquez, Rubens (1577-1640) was the first Northern Painter, to paint landscape subjects under the influence of Venetian Painters. Rubens was the first European artist to attempt the representation of sunlight and even of the Sun itself.

The influence of the so-called Venetian Landscape painters gradually inspired three other northern (?) painters, namely Claude Lorraine, Gasper Poussin, and Salvator Rosa.

Though in the 17th century and also for sometime thereafter the art of landscape painting was still to a great extent conventional, governed by studied artifices, the Art may be said to have in that period obtained full recognition as a definite and a dignified branch of the painter's art.

Like many of his contemporaries Claude Lorraine (1600-1682), the French painter spent most part of his life in Italy fully assimilating the lessons of the great masters of the Renaissance. Though very much influenced by the Italian Masters, Claude at least had the courage to love nature enough to paint landscape for its own sake, yet it would be inaccurate to say that Claude was the first to draw landscape.

Claude's landscape is typically represented in *'Landscape with the Flight to Egypt'* (Dresden Gallery). Here he uses a Biblical theme as a peg to hang his landscape.

The other famous Master of classical landscape painting is Nicolo Poussin. The forms of scenery Claude has represented are richer and more general than Poussin's, but Poussin has a far greater power and his landscapes, though more limited in material are incomparably nobler than Claude's.

## Dutch School of Landscape :

Landscape Painting as an independent Art was firmly established by a group of painters of the Dutch School beginning from the 16th and covering the whole of the 17th century.

Indeed the landscape background in the paintings of the brothers Van Eyck and their successors as well as in the Calendar pictures and in the single presentations of the miniature painters of this period are unsurpassed in sincere fidelity of observation and perfect rendering of details. Dutch landscape painting developed early and independently on a purely national basis.

The most popular figure in Dutch Landscape Painting is Meindert Hobbema (1638-1709), a plain matter-of-fact man, content to paint what he sees, the objective appearances of the landscape, viewed through the unimaginative medium of a healthy naturalism. His popularity and the exaggerated estimate of his merits is based on his world famous masterpiece : '*The Avenue of Middleharmes*' in the National Gallery, which is an unique example rather than a typical product of his brush.

Another talented Dutch landscapist, who attained like Hobbema, a spurious popularity, was Paul Potter (1625-1653) who started painting when he was nineteen. His landscapes are heightened by the introduction of animals and his best canvasses are cattlepieces rather than landscapes, with broad treatments of visions of the earth or the clouds of the heavens.

The greatest name in Dutch Painting in fact in the general history of European painting is Van Rijn Rembrandt.

Rembrandt (1606—1669) was not a landscapist pure and simple. He has chiefly represented landscapes as a setting, in which only a few lines summarise the salient features of a scene or with tonal effects of light and shade that elaborate and enrich the composition of his figure subjects. We can refer to an impromptu

Drawing of a '*Canal with a Rowing Boat*' in which in a series of masterly hatches, the great master has recorded his impression of a river scene with a distant building, balanced with a group of convincing trees the different foliages of which are rendered with remarkable precision and character.

But Jacob Ruisdael (1628—1682) is the real master of landscape. It is impossible to give any idea of his extraordinary range of subjects and his versatility by citing one or two examples. His landscapes not only reveal his knowledge of and feeling for but his penetrating vision to see and present not only the details, but also of the *ensemble* and his mastery of sky and cloud effects, very typically represented in his *View of Hearlem* (Rijk Museum, Amsterdam).

Adriaen Van De Velde is another distinguished name in Dutch Landscape Painting. Though he painted some Biblical and historical subjects his true metier was Landscape with the interesting addition of groups of figures and animals.

Albert Cuyp is another famous name in Dutch Landscape Painting.

### French School

We now come to the French School at the beginning of the 19th century. We have already referred to the works of Claude Lorrain.

But in the beginning of the 19th century another French artist Jean Baptiste Camille Corot (1796—1875) made a very distinguished contribution to Landscape painting by numerous sketches, oils, and etchings representing landscapes, studied at different places and country, particularly in Italy and France. His remarkable representations of pastorals were rendered in a peculiar technique in soft dreamy landscapes having a mystery and mysticism all his own.

Another French painter Puvis de Chavannes (1824—1898) working about the middle of the 19th century has treated Landscape Painting in a different manner. He was a mural painter and a decorator rather than a realistic painter of landscape as such. Yet the landscapes he has introduced as backgrounds for his figure-subjects have a charm and lyrical beauty all their own.

In his wall-painting depicting *Saint Genevieve* praying the landscape background consists of a pastoral scene spreading far into the distance where the trees stand out in bright contrast against silvery lights of the distant sky. The beauty of the subject-matter is greatly enhanced by the charming background of a poetic landscape.

### The English School : Constable And Turner :

But the Art of landscape painting in Europe was destined to paths of new development by new forces which came into operation about the beginning of the 19th century. These new forces were brought into existence by two painters of great talent and original vision who were contemporaries : John Constable (1776—1837) and J. M. W. Turner (1776—1851) both born about the year 1775.

While Turner gathered his principles of painting and of interpreting Nature by studying landscapes in all countries and under different skies, Constable confined his experiments by studying the landscapes of his birth-place.

Constable by a series of conscientious studies of English Landscape established the claims of landscape in England at a moment when untamed Nature was almost universally regarded as uncouth and unlovely. His was a new gesture in the new direction of nature-worship. He was no romantic but he planted the seeds of Wordsworthian romanticism that was later to dominate both the poetry and the painting of the nineteenth century. His early landscape is very typically illustrated in a *Cottage in a Corn-field* (South Kensington).

But Constable's great discovery was the discovery of the regions of the cloudland and his own words described how he sought to conceive clouds as part of the general structure :of his compositions. This is illustrated in most of his later paintings in which the clouds play a dominant part.

We now come to the greatest figure in Landscape Painting in Europe Turner, who was made famous by the appreciative criticism of Ruskin who devoted several volumes of his "Modern Painters" to interpret the beauties of Turner by discussing the fundamental principles of Art.

Turner's purpose was not the reproduction of Nature for his own sake but to express himself in an interpretation, a poetical expression of the majesty that he felt in the Sun, and the Sea.

In many ways, Turner anticipated the vision and technique of the Impressionist Painters of France who about the year 1850 claimed to discover new secrets of Nature and formulated revolutionary doctrines as to the correct way to look at Nature and the correct way of interpreting such vision.

The most fundamental new contribution of Monet to landscape painting is that he ignored a literal translation of the "Local features" of a scene and he made light itself the real subject-matter of his pictures. This apothesis of Light was taken a step further by his colleague Camille Pissarro (1851—1903). Following Monet, Pissarro substituted for the rhythm and balance of form the rhythms and balance of light and colour. Realising that the appearances of Nature changed every moment as the light shifted from time to time the artists of this group used to paint the same subject from the same point of view a great many times, going out at Sunrise with twenty canvasses so at to catch quickly the elusive chances under varying lights and atmospheric conditions. And the results are astonishingly different. Each sketch is a realistic rendering of a fleeting impression. Hence the term "Impressionist" well suggests the character of the works of this school of artists.

Another new feature of their methods was the introduction of the scientific principles of optics. After attending a lecture with certain optical instruments of blending colours by revolving discs, George Seurat (1866—1890), another member of this group found out that if one placed pure colours side by side on a canvass instead of mixing them on the palette a brilliance and intensity of colour could be obtained which was far superior to the effect of mixing them on a palette. They therefore started a new technique by way of "Division" of the touches by placing dots or points of colour independently side by side on the canvass. This method first used by Seurat came to be known as "Divisionism" or "Pointillism". Thus in his picture of *'The Bridge of Vourbevoie'*, Seurat presents the feature of his composition not by a series of lines but by a series of "dots" or "points". Reflected on the retina of the eyes the dots of colours blend with the effect of a superlative brilliance with vibrant and shimmering effect.

Vincent Van Gogh (1853—1890)—a member of the Neo-Impressionist or Post-Impressionist Group and the most daring of modernistic innovators, used the principles of "Division" with new and surprising effects by substituting strokes in place of the dots. He placed strokes of Primary Colours in close juxtaposition to obtain brilliance and luminosity of effect. We easily notice the savage vigour of his strokes in his famous picture depicting '*The Road and the Cypress*". Another of his innovations was the use of arbitrary colours to suit his purpose and his designs for colour harmony without any reference to the actual colours of natural objects, whether of vegetation, tree or sky. We notice also in this painting an utter disregard of the conventional academic rule of not placing anything at the exact centre of the picture to avoid a formal symmetry. Here, he wantonly violates the canon by placing the tree—right at the very centre of his canvass.

Another revolutionary of the Post-Impressionist Group was Paul Cêzanne (1839—1866)—the discoverer of the Principles of "Cubism". He emphasized on the quality of Design by breaking up the elements of Forms into smaller units and stringing them up in a significant pattern of vibrating Rhythm. He felt that a picture must exist as a design of flat patterns even before it creates an illusion of depth. In his study of the "*Great Trees*" (Les Grandes Arbres)—the foliages are arrayed in a series of purposeful patterns and twisted into forms which can hardly be recognised as leaves of the trees. Roughly hewn chunks of 'Form" is a very apt description of the general effect of his pictures.

The last phase of the Modernistic School of Landscape is represented by Donanier Rousseau who was a self-educated artist not trained in any school of art. He stands for a new order of Realism. He claims that the well-balanced tonalities of an artistically arranged forms of nature were unworthy of exhibition because they did not contain all the leaves and grasses, twigs, flowers and pebbles which he could see if he looked carefully and therefore felt bound to put in with meticulous accuracy. His view of Nature is the view seen through a microscope which misses nothing, omits nothing, and neglects nothing. Yet in his presentation of a '*Jungle with monkey*'—although we are presented with a minute, microscopic views of plants and leaves, yet this apparent piece of superficial and childish realism has also a mysterious sense of awe and solemnity which suggests the Cosmic powers of Nature, its fecundity, fertility and profuseness in an astonishing way.

We do not claim to have done anything like justice in bringing under focus such a varied and extensive field, but in presenting a very summary and imperfect history, we have endeavoured to cite most of the leading trends and tendencies and the bewildering variety of painting landscape devised by the artists of the Western countries.

## SECOND LECTURE :

# LANDSCAPE IN INDIAN LITERATURE

### Vedic Literature :

Having taken a bird's eye view of the evolution of Landscape in European Art, it is now our task to trace the history of Landscape in Indian Art. Before we begin to search for actual survivals of landscape in Visual Arts, we have to investigate into the sources of the ideas of landscape in literary and verbal formulations. Before actual verbal descriptions of the beauties of Natural Scenes begin to appear in Classical Sanskrit Literature, the Elemental and Cosmic essences of landscape are met with in the Rig-Veda—the earliest records of Indian Culture, traditionally communicated through oral repetitions. The profound mystic and mythical presentations of the Elemental Forces of Nature are interpreted by the Vedic poets in a manner which embodies the fundamental ideas which make up the idea of landscape without giving a mere superficial transcript of natural scenes.

In a system of thinking in which the physical world is thought of as veiling the ultimate reality, landscape in a superficial sense has no particular significance. Even the Sun is not regarded for its own sake but as the revealer of the ultimate reality. Savitā is frequently prayed to reveal the reality behind the appearances : "that face do thou unveil", or "that door do thou open"—(*Maitrī Upaniṣad*, VI, 35). Yet in the hyphenated concept of *Dyāvā-Prithivī*, the conjunctive idea of the Heaven and the Earth, we have the basic element of landscape in Vedic Culture.

In some of the myths of Creation in the Rigveda we find Indra makes the Titan Vṛtra gape and Agni and Soma escape from his mouth. (RV. X, 90, 13-14.)

As explained by Coomaraswamy, Heaven and Earth are extracted by the promise of Lights to Heaven and Beautiful Forms to Earth. This is made more explicit in the *Panca-Viṃśa Brōmhaṇa* (XVIII, 9, 6), where it is stated that Heaven obtained from Vṛtra—her lights (*naksatrāni*) and Earth her diversified phenomena (*citrāni rupāni*), *rūpāni*, in this connection being interpreted as "things in their kind", the "works of distinction and adornment". A passage in the RV. (III 55, 5) also refers to *puru rūpā Vapuṃsī*—the variegated beauty of the Earth.

The third element of the landscape is provided by the Sun (Savitā, Bradhna, Aśva) born of Aditi (Āditya)—one of the Eight Ādityas—of which seven return upwards, while one remains in the world as the manifested Sun in each of the Three Worlds. Of innumerable Vedic references to the finding of the Sun or Fire lost in the Waters, in the Depths (*guhā*) or in the Darkness (*tamas*), *e.g.*, in Rigveda (v. 40, 6) *gulaṃ sūryam tamasāpavratena* have primary reference to the obscuration of light antecedent to the Dawn of a World-cycle and to the finding of this Light by means of hymns or rites chanted or undertaken by Devas or men.

In Vedic literature the Sun is frequently called Aśva the Horse as he travels across the sky : "Ye traveller of the sky, ye Aśva, I am fixing you upon the Yūpa for Prajāpati". (Vājās, Saṃhitā, 23, 12, 54).

The three phases of the Sun—morning, noon and evening—are referred to in a passage in the Rigveda. "Thou art the Yama, thou art the Āditya, thou art, ye Arva, the Trita (three-formed, with thy form of the morning, noon, and the evening) with secret vow thou art propitiated by the offering of Soma Juice. You have three ties or halting places in sky" (1. 163. 3). The *Śutapatha Brāmhaṇa* (13. 2. 7. 6) also says that the Aśva is three-footed—It is the sun with his three feet in the Heavens.

In some texts we find the Sun and the Ocean in a juxtaposed seascape. Thus in the *Brihadārṇyaka Upaniṣada* (1. 1. 2) we find : "The day is the foregoing glory of the Aśva which is born of the eastern ocean. The night is the following glory of the Aśva which is born in the western ocean" (Br A. 1. 1. 2). Here it is clear that the Aśva is the Sun who rises from the eastern ocean and sets in the western ocean. "The Samudra is its friend, Samudra is its birth-place." (Br. 1. 1. 2)

How the evening rays of the Sun colour the forms of the forest in an attractive harmonious range of colours, familiar to us, is depicted in a passage in the RV. "Ye Aśva thy body is about to fall (set), thy gait is quick like wind, thy horns (rays of light, light pencils) are numerously arranged thou travelest in the woods giving rise to pleasant colours" (RV. 1. 163. 11).

The sunset is visualized in another hymn : "The Aśva is going down to attain its ultimate goal, the meeting with his father and mother (the sky and the earth, who are joined in the west). The Devas, seeing thy victorious departure, pray to thee for good" (RV. 1. 163. 13)

Indra is credited with the achievement of releasing the cosmic waters to which the powers of darkness had imprisoned before creation :—

"That, I Champion (Indra) has smitten in thy mainly might (*vīryena)* the serpent ? (*ahim vṛtam*), the Magician as he lurked, obscured, and hidden away in secret in the waters (*guhā hitaṃ guhyaṃ guḷham apsva apīvṛtaṃ māyinaṃ kṣīyntaṃ*) him that held down the Waters and the Light of Heaven (RV. II 11. 5). In the following passage (RV. II 19-2-3) the release of the waters is made explicit. The mighty Indra, hewing apart the serpent that withheld the flood *(arṇo vṛtam)*, propelled the flood of waters to the sea (of life) brought about the sun's nativity (*ajanayat sūryaṃ*) found the cattle, by means of night, fulfilled the work of days." In some passages Varuṇa is conceived as a "god of day or as a god of night"—a power of light as also of darkness.

In a Gupta relief we have a remarkable symbolical picture of Indra quelling the Dragon Vṛtra and releasing the Cosmic Waters.* (Plate I)

### Indra God Of The Sky :

In RV. (1. 163. 2) we are told "this Aśva is given by the Yama to the Trita Indra, the first Gandharva rests on it. Receiving light from the Sura. Asva rests on the Vasus". Here Indra is the sky-god, the Aśva or the sun appears in the sky on its three places, hence the sky or the Indra is called Trita. The Gandharva is the sun that rests on the sky. In relation to the sun, Indra (sky) is thus described "with the horns of gold and feet of copper it (the sun) is as swift as the mind, the Indra (sky) lags behind him" (RV. i. 163. 9). Sometimes, the setting of the sun is suggested by the allegory of Indra the sky-god steals the sun and conceals in the under-world.

The conception of Indra as a Rain-god is derived from the passage already referred to. There is mentioned a snake-deity

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* O. C. Gangoly : 'The Indian Dragon : A Vedic motif on a Gupta Relief' *Modern Review, June, 1952*

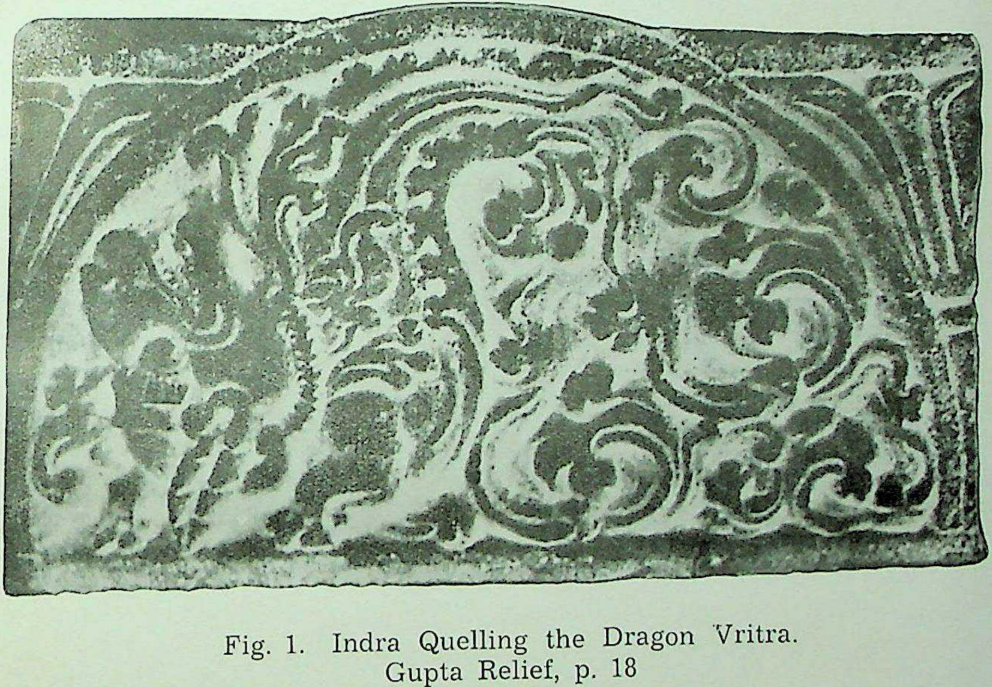

Fig. 1. Indra Quelling the Dragon Vritra.
Gupta Relief, p. 18

in the Vedas which represents the cloud. It is the Ahi (RV. 6, 20, 2). The Ahi as a cloud-fiend obstructs the rain of the Kṣiroda ocean to fall on earth. Hence Indra the solar deity kills it (*ahiṃ vajreṇa Maghavan vi vṛśvaḥ*, RV. 4, 17. 7) and then the rain began to fall on the earth.

The dawn as the first precursor of the Rising Sun is suggested in a passage (RV. 8, 7, 27) : "We are joining (to the Yupa) the giver of food Aśva, who is the first Aruṇa of Ushā." This is repeated in another passage : Aśva (sun) is the Uṣā of the first Aruṇa" (*yukṣvā hi vājinīvatyaśvān adyāruṇām uṣaḥ*). (RV. 1. 92, 15, SV 2 121, 3). But the famous Hymn to Usas gives a poetical physical picture of the phenomenon which is without a parallel in the whole Vedic literature.

### Rivers :

The Hymn to the son of Waters (*Āpaṃ napāt*, RV. II, 35) contains picturesque and metaphorical descriptions of the flow of waters : "Eager for strength my flow of speech I utter : may the flood's child accept my songs with favour. Will not the rapid son of Waters make them lovely, for he it is who shall enjoy them ?"

In a famous passage (RV. III, 33, 1) we have objective and personal pictures of two of the famous Vedic rivers—Vipāśa (Vyās) Sutudrī (Sutlej).

"Forth from the bosom of the mountains, eager as two swift
mares with loosened rein contending
Like two bright mother-cows who lick their youngling
Vipāśa and Sutudrī speed down their waters (1).

Impelled by Indra whom ye pray to urge you, ye move as it
were on chariots to the ocean.
Flowing together swelling with your billows,
O lucid, streams, each of you seeks the other (2).

I have attained the most material river, we have approached
Vipāśa, the broad and the blessed.
Licking as it were their calf the pair of mothers flow onward
to their common home together (3)."

In later Vedic Literature there are continuous references to various aspects of the phenomena of nature sometimes in mythological imagery, sometimes in poetic metaphors.

Thus in the *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāmhaṇa* (1, 2), it is prescribed that the Gāyatra Sāman should be sung "according to the course of the Gale and the Waters *(Vāyos ca apān cānu vartma gayam)* which course is, with respect to the Gale, "from all quarters together winding itself in so as to generate a whirlwind" (*resmānān janamāno niveṣṭamānoh*) and as to the Waters, "making bends, winding themselves in, flowing in eddies" *(ankānsi kurvānā nivestamāna āvartān sṛjamānah).*

The above gives a vivid picture of the forms of Waters flowing in eddies in brooks and rivulets.

But, the most significant and essential element of Landscape in our modern sense is met with in a passage in the *Śvetāsvatera Upaniṣad* (VI, 20). If we recall the picturesque definition of a Landscape as 'an eternity between Heaven and Earth' the element of Eternity is provided by the continuously receding distance running away from the foreground to a vanishing point in the background of every landscape, diving into the depth of eternity.

In the RV. the creation is continually described as a pillaring apart *(vi-skambhana)* of Heaven and Earth (Coomaraswamy). Between the Heaven and Earth, the third element of the infinity of space in the third dimension is suggested not in the RV., but in a passage in the Śvetaśvatara Upaniṣad (VI, 20). "Not until men shall be *able to roll up space like a skin* (*carmavat ākāśaṃ veṣtayisyanti*). We have here an explicit reference to the receding sense of distance—which introduces the most essential element of Landscape Art.*

In a Hymn dedicated to Arṇyāni, the forests—in the Tenth Mandala (RV., 146, 1-6)—there is a wonderful suggestive picture of the Forest sceneries couched in a mystic and poetic anguage :—

"O ! You chains of Forests, You chains of Forests !—You seem to disappear and vanish before my eyes (how far you seem to travel). O ! You Forests ! You do not care about the welfare of our villages. You are fearless, and remain in isolation all alone.

The animals appear to say something through the bellowing voices of the Bulls and the Birds appear to reply to them by their screechings (and the Beetles respond in their continuous shrills) (?) This sounds like the song of someone singing the praise of the Forests—by knocking out melodies at each fret of the *Vinā*. It appears that somewhere in the depths of the forests the cows are grazing and somewhere something is shining like buildings. The Forests wrapped in shadows of the evening appear to disgorge from its depth hundreds of carts slowly moving out. Who is that calling back the cows ?—Who is that chopping woods ? Someone living inside the Forest somewhere has shouted out in the evening ! In sooth, the forests do not take the life of anyone and there is no fear there, unless some wild beasts happen to appear ! One can live happily in the forests tasting the many varieties of sweet fruits. There are no tillers in the forests fragrant with the odour of the Musk-deer, yet a lot of fruit is produced without scratching the earth. Thus have I pictured and described you—Oh ! You chains of Forests—the affectionate Mothers of all the Animals !"

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* Cited by Coomaraswamy in I. H. Q. XIV, 1938, p. 1-56 at p. 49 *The Symbolism of the Dome.*

The above Hymn to the Forests gives us a brilliant visual picture of the sights and sounds of Nature and renders the spirit of the Primeval Forests with its profound mystery expressed is terms of a mystic grandeur with a strange realistic flavour. It is the earliest description of Forests in Indian Literature.

We can perhaps trace the Vedic traditions of the manner of painting landscape in a late miniature of the Jaina School (Frontis-piece). In the record of Triśalā's Dream in the Jain *Kalpasutra* (46) we have a remarkable description of a Mountain on Fire. The text states : "She saw a fire in vehement motion, fed with very brilliant oil and mead (*mahu ghaya parisiccamāna = madhu-ghrita parisicya māua*), smokeless and crackling. The mass of its flames, rising one above the other—made as it were a network, and here and there the tips of quivering flames scorched as it were the very sky." *(ambaraṃ vā payantaṃ = ambaraṃ ivā pacat,* cp. RV. X, 45, 7 : *sukreṇa sociṣā dyāminakṣan).**

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* Coomaraswamy : The "Conqueror's Life" in Jaina Painting, J.I.S.O.A., Vol. III, No. 2, December, 1935, p. 127.

## Landscape in Buddhist Literature :

Having made a summary survey of Vedic literature we now pass on to Buddhist Literature in our search of data for Landscape Art.

It is unreasonable to expect much references to the physical beauty of Nature in a cycle of culture in which renunciation of the snares of beauty is the cardinal doctrine of belief. The Buddha asserted that the vision of serene spiritual beauty is only accessible after the ascetic has been able to free himself from the attractions of physical beauty. Thus in the *Therī gāthā (Psalms of the Sisters)* in the story of Sundarī Nandā (XLI, 4 55-57), the Buddha a recorded to have said: "Behold Nandā, the foul compound, diseased, Impure ! Compel thy heart to contemplate *what is not fair to view*" (p. 82)...So look thou on it, day and night with mind unfalteringly steadfast, till alone. By thine own wit delivered from the thrall of beauty, thou dost gain vision serene" (p. 84).

The serene beatific vision indeed bursts forth before the eyes of Nun Selā (*Ibid*. p. 43).

Then one day she came up to the Bo-tree of the Master and sat down thinking : "If a Buddha, a exalted one, be un-equalled and peerless among men, may this one show me the miracle of Buddha-hood". Scarce had the thought arisen *when the tree blazed forth, the branches appeared as if made of gold, the horizon shone all around.*

Yet, in spite of the prohibition against the snares of Natural Beauty there crop up, here and there, little bits of beautiful landscape. Thus in the song of Nun Paṭācārā (XLVII, p. 72) we get a glimpse of a ploughed field :—

"With ploughshares ploughing up the field with seed,
Sown in the breast of the earth, men with their crops
Enjoy their gains and nourish wife and child" (112).

A cameo of nature-scene is painted by Nun Cāpā (p. 132) :

> "O, dark-eyed love, am I not fair to see,
> As the liana swaying in the woods,
> As the pomegranate tree in fullest bloom.
> Growing on hill-top, or the trumpet-flower
> Drooping over the mouth of island cavern ?"

(Text : *kāḷ'nginim | va takkāriṃ pupphitaṃ girimuddhani | phullaṃ, dālikala ṭḷhim | va antadipeva pāṭaliṃ* (p. 297).

In Jīvaka's Mango-grove Subhā, the Bhikkuni, is thus way laid by a gallant (*Psalms of the Sisters,* p. 149 H, verses 369 to 373)

> "Young art thou maiden and faultless what seekest *thou* in the holy life ? (369)
> Cast off that yellow-hued raiment and come, in the blossoming woodland
> Seek we our pleasure filled with the incense of blossoms the trees waft (370)
> Sweetness. See, the Spring's at the prime, the season of happiness !
> Come with me to the flowering woodland and seek we our pleasure (371).
> Sweet overhead is the sough of the blossoming crests of the forest
> Swayed by the wind-gods. But thou goest alone in the Jungle,
> Lost in its depth how wilt thou find aught to delight or content thee ? (372).
> Haunted is the great forest with many a herd of wild creatures,
> Broken its peace by the tramplings of elephants rutting and savage
> Empty of mankind and fearsome, is it there thou wouldst go un-accompanied ? (373).

These unexpected glimpses into beautiful bits of landscape recorded in these Psalms were committed to writing about 80 years Before Christ, so that they anticipate the nature-pieces of Aśvaghoṣa and Kalidāsa by several centuries. Rhys David makes some very profound comments on these songs of the Nuns : He says : "Enshrined in the casket of legends constructed by the loving piety of centuries, these little poems of the Theris take life and breath and colour...We may see in this dream-pageant of Sisters of the antique world conjured up for us by the chronicler the reiterated testimony to high quest, to devoted heart, to indomitable resolve" (Psalms of the Sisters, Intro., p XVIII).

There are various other passages—in other texts of Pali Literature which give us fine glimpses of nature-scenes.

### We now come to Descriptions of Landscapes in the Ramayana

Throughout the cantos of Vālmiki's Epic the poet has introduced at various places attractive descriptions of natural scenes which offer visual contrasts to the stirring dramatic elements of the great epic. Some of these descriptive pieces run to great length and cover large and expansive canvasses. To save space, we propose to give relevant extracts leaving the reader to enjoy the beauty of the originals in their extensive texts.

When Rāma visited the *āśrama* of Agastya, the gaeat sage had recommended the tract of Dandakāraṇya known as Pancavaṭī' as the most suitable place where Rāma could build an *āśrama* for himself and stay.

The sage pointed out that this is an even piece of land and beautifully surrounded by trees in flowers, which you can turn into a beautiful homestead according to your taste. Yonder is seen a colourful lake decked with lotuses resplendent with sweet-smelling flowers awakened by the rays of the sun.

(Text : Ayam deśah samah śrimān puspitaistarubhir vritaḥ
Iyamāditya samkāśaih padmaih surabhi gandhibhiḥ
Adūre driśyate ramya padminī padma-śobhitā
Aranyakānda, 15 sarga 9. 10. 11).

The famous Hill Chitrakuṭa is described in terms of a vivid realism with the rich range of its colour harmony, painted with all the elements of their visual beauty shining in the varied components of an alluring landscape.

"Look darling, on this noble hill
Which sweet birds with their music fill
Bright with a thousand metal dyes
His lofty summits cleave the skies
See, there a silvery sheen is spread
And there like blood the rocks are red.
There shows a streak of emerald green
And pink and yellow glow between
There where the higher peaks ascend
Crystal and flowers and topaz blend,
And others flash their light afar
Like mercury or some fair star.
With such a store of metals dyed
The king of hills is glorified.
There through the wilds and birds' populous home
The harmless bear and tiger roam
Hyaenas range the woody slopes
With herds of deer and antelopes.
See, love, the trees that clothe his side
All lovely in their summer pride.

In richest wealth of leaves arrayed
With flower and fruit and light and shade.
Look where the young Rose-apple glows,
What loaded boughs the mango shows,
See, waving in the Western wind
The light leaves of the Tamarind ;
Bnd mark that giant Peepul through
The feathery clump of tall bamboo."

(Book II, Canto XCIV, Griffith, Vol. II, p. 375)

When the banished brothers came upon the beautiful valley of the Godavari, they recognized, with unexpected surprise, the bit of land spoken of by Agastya

"Agastya's words now find we true
He told the charms which here we view
Here the trees that blossom o'er
Godavari's most lovely shore.
Whose pleasant flood from side to side
With swans and geese is beautified,
Bnd fair banks crowded with the deer,
That steal form every covert near.
The peacock's cry is loud and shrill
From many a tall and lovely hill,
Green belted by the trees that wave
Full blossoms over the rock and cave.
Like elephants whose huge fronts glow
With painted streaks, the mountains show
Long lines of gold and silver sheen
With copper's darker hues between.
With every tree each hill is graced
Where creeper's blossoms interplaced
Look where the Sāls' long branches sway.

The date-tree and the Jack are near,
And their long stems Tamālas rear.
See the tall Mango lift his head
Asokas all their glory spread,
The ketaka her sweet buds unfold,
And champaks hang their cups of gold.
The spot is pure and pleasant : here
Are multitudes of birds and deer.
O ! Laksmana, with our father's friend
What happy hours we here shall spend !"

(Book III, Canto XV, Griffith, Vol III, p. 70-71)

While the banished trio built their hermitage and lived there for a time, the Autumn season gave way to early winter *(hemanta)* which invested the place with a new beauty and novel charms :—

"While there the high-souled hero spent
His tranquil hours in sweet content,
The glowing autumn passed, and then
Came winter so beloved of men.

(Griffith, p. 73, Book III, Canto XVI)

* * * *

The time is come, to thee more dear
Than all the months that mark the year :
The gracious seasons' joy and pride,
By which the rest are glorified.
A robe of hoary rime is spread
O'er earth corn engarlanded.

* * * *

Dark is the north : the Lord of Day
To Yama's South has turned away :
And she sad widow shines no more
Reft of the bridal mark she wore.

Himalaya's hill, ordained of old,
The treasure-house of frost and cold
Scarce conscious of the feebler glow,
Is truly now the Lord of Snow.
Warmed by the noontide's genial rays
Delightful are the glorious days :
But how we shudder at the chill
Of evening shadows and the rill !
How weak the Sun, how cold the breeze !
How white the rime on grass and trees !
The leaves are sere, the woods have lost
Their blossoms killed by nipping frost.
'Neath open skies we sleep no more. (Griffith, p. 74)

* * * *

See how the dewy tears they weep
The barley, wheat and woodland steep."

Rama's sojourn to Prasravana Giri—where he lives in a cave at the top of the hill—offers an opportunity to the poet to indulge in a long poetical description of a new landscape, glistening with vivid realistic touches :—

"Close by the cavern's portal lies,
A level stone of ample size
And sable hue, a mighty block
Long severed from the parent stock.
Now let thine eyes bent northward rest
Awhile upon the mountain crest ;
High as a cloud that brings the rain,
And dark as iron rent in twain.
Look southward, brother, now and view
A cloudy pile of paler hue

Like mount Kailāsa's topmost height
Where ores of every tint are bright.
See, Lakshmana see before our cave
That clear brook eastward roll its wave
As though't were Gangā's infant rill
Down streaming from the tree peaked hill."
(Griffith, p. 139, Book IV, Canto XXVII)

But there is nothing to beat the vivid description of the "Coming of the Rains" *(Jalāgama Kāla varnaṇaṃ)* in the 28th Canto of the Kiskindhya Kānda (Griffith, p. 114). The advent of the Rains augments the poignant grief of Rama separated from Sitā abducted by Rāvana, and heightens the descriptions of a multitude of details with deeply felt emotional flavours.

"See, brother, see" thus Rāma cried
"On Mālyavat's dark-wooded side,
A chain of clouds, like lofty hills,
The sky with gathering shadow fills.
Nine months those clouds have borne the load
Conceived from sunbeams as they glowed,
And having drunk the seas, give birth,
And drop their offspring on the earth.
Easy it seems of such a time
That flight of cloudy stairs to climb,
And, from their summit, safely won,
Hang flowery wreath about the sun.
See how the flash of evening's red
Fringes the fleecy clouds overhead
Till all the sky is streaked and lined
With bleeding wounds incarnadined.

Or the wide firmament above
Shows like a lover sick with love,
And, pale with cloud-lets, heaves a sigh
In the soft breeze that wonders by.

See, by the fervent heat embrowned
Now drenched with recent showers, the ground
Pours out in floods her gushing tears,
Like Sītā wild with torturing fears.

So softly blows this cloud-born breeze
Cool through the boughs of camphor trees
That one might hold it in the cup
Of hallowed hands and drink it up.

See, brother, where that rocky slap
Where odorous shrubs in rain-drops weep,
Shows like Sugrīva when they shed
The royal balm upon his head.

Like students at their task appear
Those hills whose misty peaks are near :
Black deerskin garments wrought of cloud
Their forms with fitting mantles shroud ;

Each torrent from the summits poured
Supplies the place of sacred cord ;
And winds that in their caverns moan
Sound like the voice's undertone

From east to west red lightnings flash,
And, quivering 'neath the golden lash,
The great sky like a generous steed
Groans only (?) at each call to speed.

Yon lightning, as it flashes through
The giant cloud of sable hue,
Recalls my votaress Sitā pressed
Mid struggles to the demon's breast.

See, on those mountain ridges stand
Sweet shrubs that bud and bloom expand.

The soft rain ends their pangs of grief,
And drops its pearls on flower and leaf
But all their raptures stab me through
And woke my pining love anew."
(Griffith, p. 146, Book IV)

In the Kiskindhyā Kānda (30 Canto) there are charming descriptions of Autumn Landscapes from which a few verses deserve quotation :

"Cancat candra-kara-sparsa-harṣon milita tārakā
Aho rāgavatī sandhyā jahāti svayamamavaraṃ ॥ 45 ॥
Rātriḥ śasankodita-saumya-vaktrā tārāganon-mīlita cāru-netra
Jyotsnāṃ śuka prāvaraṇā vibhāti narīva suklāmśuka sambritāngī ॥ 46 ॥
Vipakka śāli prasavāni bhuktvā praharṣitā sārasa-cāru paṃktiḥ
Nabhaḥ samākramati śighra-vegā vātava-dhūtā grathiteva mālā ॥ 47 ॥

* * * *

Nāvair nadīnām kusuma prahasair vyādhyamanair mṛidu mārutena
Dhautamālā khsauma-paṭa-prakāsaih kulāni kāsa rūpā sobhitānī ॥ 51 ॥

## Descriptions of Nature in the Mahābhārata :

In order of time the Mahābhārata comes after the Rāmāyaṇa.

In the stately march of complicated events, supernatural anecdotes, thrilling dramas, hair-raising wars, and Homeric battles, there is no time for the Reciter of the Great Epic to tarry anywhere, in leisurely cotemplative mood, to look at the beauties of Nature except in a very casual way. Most of the descriptions such as those occurring in the *Vana-parva* are conventional and formal as the picture of Dvaitavanaṃ (24 canto) and some forests covered by Arjuna in the *Kirāta-parva* (38 canto).

Puṇyaṃ Dvaita-vanaṃ ramyaṃ vivisur Bharatarsabhaḥ ॥16॥
Tāl śāla tālāmra madhuka nīpa kadamva sarjjarjjuna
karnikāraih
Topatyaye puṣpa dharairupetaṃ mahāvanam rāṣtra-patir
dadarśa ॥17॥
Mahādrumānaṃ śikharesu tasthu manoramaṃ vaca
mudīrayantaḥ
Mayura dotyuha cakora saṃghastasmin vane vāhana kokilasca
Karenu yuthaiḥ saha yuthapānam tasmin vane raṣtra-patir
dadarśa ॥

In the above description of Dvaita-vana, there is no visual concrete picture of a forest but a mechanical assemblage of a list of names of trees strung together.

The forest covered by Arjuna in the *Kirāta-parva* is, equally, a colourless and formless string of names :

Nānā puṣpa phalopetaṃ nānā paksī niṣivitaṃ
Nānā mriga ganā-kīrṇaṃ siddha-cārana-sevitaṃ ॥15॥

* * * *

Puṣpa varsancanu mahannipāta mahītale
Megha jalanca ritatam coādayāmāsa sarvvataḥ ॥17॥
Se titya vana durgāni sannikarse mahāgireh
Śuśubhe himavat priṣṭhe vasamāno rjjunastadā ॥18॥
Tatrāpasyad druman phullan vihagair vvalgu nāditan
Nadīsca vipulāvartta vaiduryya vimala-prabhā ॥19॥

Out of the above verses there is only one line with a concrete visual description of a river with heavy eddies shining with pure brilliance of gems (line 19).

In the 64th chapter of the same Parva occur some scrappy cameos of nature-scenes made up almost of a string of names of different trees and of wild animals :

"Sa nihatya mriga vyādham pratasthe kamaleksana
Vanam prati bhayam (?) sūnyam jhillika gana nināditam ॥1॥
Simha dvīpī ruru vyāghra mahiṣarakṣa ganair yutam
Nara paksī ganākīrnam mleccha taskara sevitam ॥2॥
Śāla venudharāsvatha tindu kenguda kimśukaih
Arjjunārista samāchannam syandanaisca sa śālmalaih ॥3॥
Jamvāmra lodhra khadira śāla vetra samākulaṃ
Padmaka mālaka plakṣa kadamvodumvaravritaṃ ॥4॥

In the same Vana-parva in the Romance of Nala (64 ch.) there is a similar conventional rendering of nature-scenes which is not worth quoting.

In connection with Bhagīratha's penances to bring down Ganges from celestial regions—the Himalayas are described (Vana-parva 91th ch.) in the following verses :—

"Āri rādhāyyur Gangāṃ tapasā dagdhkilviṣaḥ
So'paśyata nara-śreṣṭha Himavantaṃ nagottamaṃ ॥4॥
Śringair vahu vidhākārair dhātu matbhiralamkritaṃ
Pavanā lambibhir meghaiḥ pariṣiktaṃ samantataḥ ॥5॥

Nadī-kumja-nitambaiśca prāsādai rūpaśobhitaṃ
Guhā kandara saṃlīnai siṃha-vyāghrair niṣevitaṃ ||6||
Jalasthānesu ramyeṣu padminībhiśca saṃkulaṃ
Sārasānāmca madhurair vvyāhritaiḥ samalamkritaṃ ||9||
Kvacit kanaka samkāśaṃ kvacit rajata-sannibhaṃ
Kvacit anjana punjābhaṃ Himavantamupāgamat ||12||

Except in the last verse suggesting colours of gold, silver and grey there is hardly any visual details in the description.

The actual 'Descent of the Ganges' is described in the following verses :—

Tataḥ papāta gaganād Gangā Himavataḥ sutā
Samuddhata mahāvartā mīna-grāha-samākulā ||36||
Taṃ dadhāra Haro rājan Gangām gagana-mekhalāṃ
Lalāṭa-deśe patitāṃ mālāṃ muktā-mayīmiva ||37||
Sā babhūva visarpantī tridhā rājan samudragā
Phenpunjākula-jalā hamsānāmiva pamktayaḥ ||38||
Kvacidābhoga-kuṭilā praskhalantī kvacit kvacit
Sā phena-paṭa-samvītā matteva pramdā'vrajat
Kvacit sā toya-ninādair nadantī nada-muttamaṃ ||39||
Evaṃ prakārān suvahūn kurvvatī gaganāccyutā
Prithivī-tala-māsadya Bhagīratha mathāvravīt ||40||

The opportunity of describing Himalayan scenes afforded in the canto of the Ascent of Heavens (Svargārohana-parva) has been neglected.

Only two verses are devoted to describe summarily the Himalayas, the king of the Indian mountains :

Tatasthe niyatatmau udīciṃ diśa masthitaḥ
Dadriśur-yoga yuktaśca Himavantaṃ mahāgiriṃ ||1||
Taṃ-cāpyati-kramantaste dadriśur vvalu kar navaṃ
Avaiksanta mahāśailam merum śikhariṇaṃ varaṃ ||2||

On the whole we have to admit that the data for visual landscapes in the Mahābhārata are very un-interesting and un-satisfactory.

This brings us to the next stage of our survey, the Later Classical Literature in Sanskrit.

### Landscape in Classical Literature :

The obvious sources of descriptive Nature-scenes are provided by the products of the Gupta age particularly by the masterpieces of Kalidasa. These come under three phases—the descriptions of Nature Poetry—in *Ritusaṃhāra*, in the well-known dramas, and in the *Megha dūtaṃ* (Cloud Massenger).

The Nature pieces in *Ritusaṃhāra* are rather embarrassing for our purpose, as in these descriptions of the Six Seasons, the Summer, the Rains, the Autumn, Early Winter, Late Winter and the Spring, Kalidasa does not paint the scenes of Nature for their own sake, but depicts them in the mental reactions and reflections of their effects in the minds of loving men and women. So that excepting in some rare passages "Pure Landscapes" do not occur in his descriptions of the Seasons.

We shall, therefore, extract from the Seasons of Kalidasa a few passages giving pure visual presentations of the Seasons.

"The scorching rays of powerful fire have reduced to ashes the seeds of the corns. The dry wind as it runs searches the leaves of the trees and cast them away to all quarters. The blazing rays of the burning sun have dried up all patches of water on all sides. A sight of the horrible images of the fag-ends of the forest strikes great terrors in one's heart."

Its terrible heat has robbed the trees of their dry leaves, and seated on the dreary leafless trees the birds are panting in exhaustion. The wary monkeys are running in search of bowers on the hills. The thirsty cattle are moving about in search of water. The *sarabhas* are dropping their straight elongated frames to extract water from the wells."

"The fire increased thousand-fold is burning in the heart of the śālmalī forest and blazing like gold in the crevices of the trees and scattered by the winds the dry loose leaves are springing on the groups of the trees and in an instant are spread all over the woodland."

*The scenes of the Rainy Season* are much more convincing in their visual forms :

"Look yonder, the skin of the sky at some places is glowing with the colours of the blue lotus attractive to the eyes, and at some places in the deep black, like pressed collyrium, and, at some places, flashing in the colours of the full breasts of pregnant women. Today the sky is covered by the many-coloured mantle of a variety of clouds."

"In the green of the new grass shining like the pressed sapphires in the newly-sprouting leaves of the plantain, and in the rows of Indra-gopa worms born of the rains. Dame Earth is glowing like a beautiful damsel decked with a variety of jewels."

"Oh, my beloved, today the beauty of the pageant of forests of the Vindhyā hills is really captivating. Look, how the variegated green of the row of grass eaten by the does, is gleaming in the beauty of their new shoots. And there on the other side the trees are decked with the embroidery of the new creepers."

The verses, descriptive of autumn scenes in Canto III, are somewhat conventional rather than visually realistic in their presentation.

"O, dear, Look, the sky is, like a king, being fanned by a row of fly-whisks. The clouds, bereft of water, are looking white, like silver conchshell and lotus. Being drained of water, the clouds have become so light that torn into thousands of fragments they are being driven in all quarters by the winds. The body of the firmament looks very like an Emperor in all his majesty, fanned by innumerable fly-whisks."

"Sweet autumn has today put on an all-white robe. The earth through the *kāśa* flowers, the night through the dewy moon, the waters of the rivulets through the swans, the lake through the Kumud blossoms, the woodland through the weighty flowers of *sapta-pārṇī*, and the groves through the *mālati* blossoms have all been strung together in one harmony of white." (Canto II, verse 2)

The Fourth Canto, *devoted to Scenes of Early Winter*, is typically represented in the following verse :

"O, Dear, Anon the happy early winter has come into view. See, what beauty is born on the forms of the new shoots of corns. The Lodhra flowers have blossomed out and decked all quarters with an uniform tone of white colour, the *sālī* rice has reached a mature ripeness. The frost has made the lotuses close their petals and how incessant are the rains of sleet."

The verses in the Canto, describing Late Winter are too much intermingled with the actions and re-actions of passionate lovers to yield any description of Pure Landscape.

From the Sixth canto, describing the advent of the Spring Season we can extract only one verse giving a visual picture of the vernal season :

"O, dear, today in this well advanced Spring Season the heart of everyone is enchanted by the sight of the rows of yonder hills. Look, how the margins of the mountains are shining with rows of trees bedecked with attractive blossoms. The lower limbs of the hills are echoing with the maddening cries of the assembly of cuckoos and the galleries of slabs of stones are fragrant with the odours of silājatu."

We now come to the great Epic : Raghuvaṃśa.

In some narrative passages in the Epic there are tiny cameos of descriptive landscape of great charm and more convincing than the descriptions in the *Ritusaṃhāra*.

Thus in the famous verse in *Raghuvaṃśa* :—

Dūrādaya-s-cakra-nibhasya-tanvī
Tamāla-tālī vanarāji nīlā ।
Ābhāti velā lavaṇāmburāśer
Dhārā nivaddheva kalaṃkarekhā ।
(13 Canto, verse 15)

Similarly in the 13th Canto of the same epic, Rāma on his return journey, points out to Sita the beauties of the Chitrakūṭa hill (Verse 47-50).

"O thou with undulating libms, look, yonder is Citrakuta hill, shining beautifully like an elated bull. Its mouths of caves are echoing with the fall of the cataracts and its horns having been grazed by the clouds look like sporting bulls, with their horns bedecked with muds. What a beautiful sight !"

"Look, yonder how the river Mandākini is flowing down the foot of Chitrakūṭa in captivating beauty looking like a glistening necklace round the neck of the hill. What pure and crystal water moving in slow steps. Methinks, the piece of land attached to the hill has put on a string of pearl necklace. O, look at it once (48)."

In the Avijnāna Śākuntalam (VI Act) there is a convincing word-picture of a Landscape given by the King outlining the scene that the King is planning to paint, giving visual presentations of the places that Śākuntalā loved :—

"Listen, what remains to be painted : I have to paint the flowing Mālini river on the sandy beach of which I have to place pairs of ducks reclining in such a manner as to be hardly visible being merged in the tones of the colour of the sands. And on both banks of the Mālini I have to paint small hillocks, the minor extensions of the mighty Himālaya, father of Pārvati. And on diverse parts of those hillocks I have to depict reclining herds of antelopes. And on the edge of the Mālini I have to paint a tall tree with branches on which the wet tree-birch, the wearing apparels of Risis after their bath have been hung to dry. And just below it, I should like to trace a black-doe leisurely scratching her left eye with the horn of Krishna-sāra antelope."

But the best word-painting of landscape are provided by several captivating passages of the *Cloud-Messenger*. The *Uttara-megha* which describes sights—after the Cloud-Messenger 'had arrived in the residential city of the Banished Yaksa'—does not contain anything but stray references to natural scenes some of which are indeed beautiful. But the *Pūrva-megha* which is almost a continuous panorama of Landscapes, woven with love passions, and woes of the Separation of the Banished lover, undoubtedly, offers various data from our point of view, providing exquisite word-painting of the beauties of natural scenes viewed in the course of an imaginary journey from Ramagiri (Ram tek, Jabbulpur) towards the West across Vidiśā, until the arrival at Ujjain at which point the aerial traveller turns straight to the North crossing Devagiri, Daśapura, Avanti and other parts of Mālava, until Indraprastha and Kurukṣetra are reached, when the voyager turns slightly to the North-east, making straight for the Himalayas passing through the sacred site of Kankhal (Hardwar) and the

Kraunca Pass until Alakā, the abode of the Yaksa, is reached. Such a picturesque itinerary is bound to furnish splendid opportunities to view and describe captivating Landscapes with hills, rivers, woods and flowering trees, which are colourfully described by Kalidāsa with all the exuberance of his poetic imagination, without missing any realistic elements in the panoramic visualizations.

As the verses are very much familiar to the average student of Sanskrit Literature, we are only citing important and relevant passages without going into exhaustive citations :—

The first contact of the Cloud with the Mountain on the First of Asar is thus described :

Āsāḍasya prathama divase megha-māśliṣṭa sānuṃ
Vapra-krīḍā parinata-gaja prekṣaniyaṃ dadarśa (verse 2)
"Ere he beheld the harbinger of rain,
A cloud that charged the peak in mimic fray
As an Elephant attacks a bank of earth in clay. (Ryder)

Translations : When with Asara's glooms the air was hung and one dark cloud round the mountains clung. In form of some Elephant whose sportive rage Ramparts scarce equal to his might, engage."

The second verse—which glorifies the advent of the First of Asar has been visualized by Abanindra Nath Tagore in one of his earliest miniatures.

In the desolation of his lonely retreat, the Yaksha, the banished hero, is like Robinson Crusoe, compelled to reduce himself to a fraternity with nature and moved to an intimate friendship with many of its aspects which transcend their inanimate life to offer sympathetic companionship to his love-sick thoughts and fancy. And he finds not only tongues in trees, books in running brooks and sermons in stones, but a faithful and sympathetic love-messenger in his desolate cloudlands.

Tagore's illustrations of the theme are not satisfied by merely echoing the poet's pictures but distinctly attain a strength and individuality which reveal the beauty of the text in its synthetic and creative vision. They stand by themselves on the merit of their own brilliant conception and treatment and we forget to ask whether they are accurate reflections of the verses on which they are founded.

We can offer a criticism of Tagore's picture that in the mysterious maze of the exquisite tapestry of nature, the figure of Yaksa cannot take a prominent or emphasized position as he has given to it. He is only one of the many items of the poetic landscape. And, another modern artist, Sri Sailendra De, has quite skilfully woven his hero in very close intimacy with the other members of the landscape and depicts him as almost in the companionship of plants, trees, rocks, and clouds, from which it is difficult to distinguish and pick out the figure of the Yaksa. In Sri Sailendra Nath De's version which is also the version of the poet, Nature is not a background for Man and his emotion, but a distinct entity which absorbs and swallows up Man and subordinates and attunes his individuality to one single harmony, with a host of other strings of one gigantic *vinā*, which plays the universal music of all created beings.

The 18th verse of the Pūrva-Megha offers a captivating landscape with a significant visual picture :

> "With ripened mango fruits his margins teem
> And thou, like wetted braids, art blackness quite ;
> When resting on the mountain, thou wilt seem
> Like the dark nipple on Earth's bosom white,
> For mating Gods and goddesses a thrilling sight."
>
> (Ryder XVIII, p. 188)

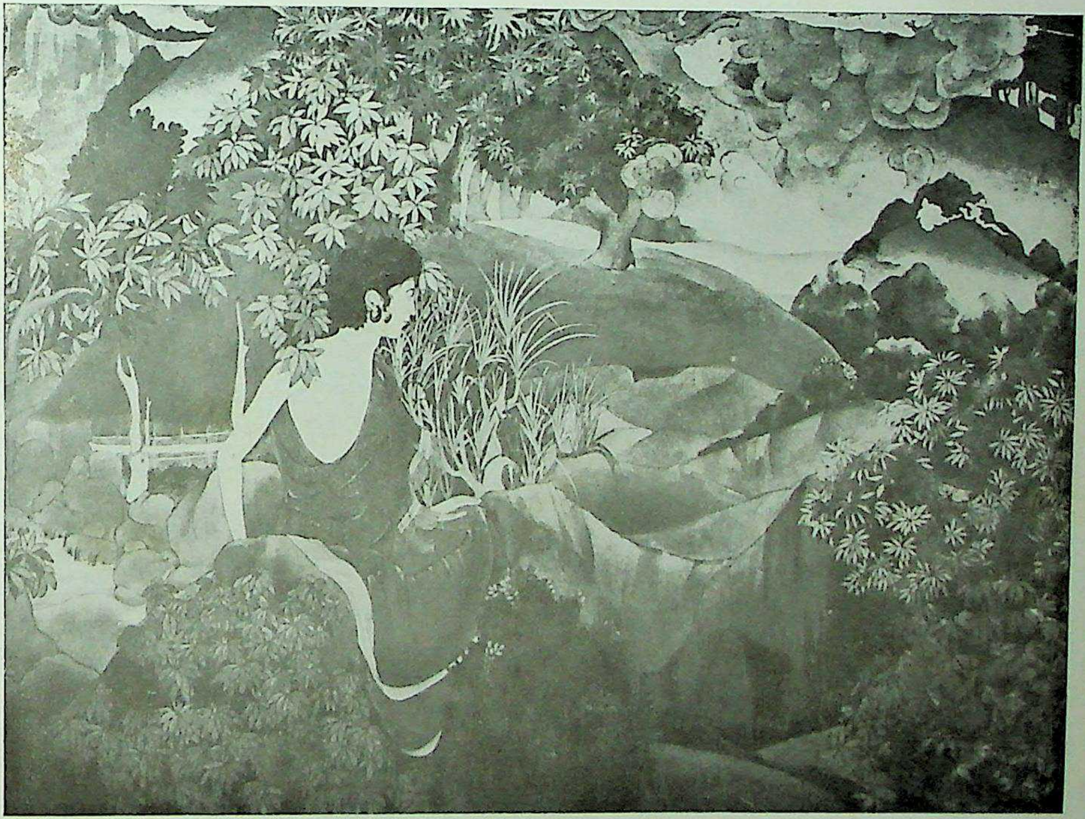


Fig. 2. The Banished Yaksa (Megha-duta)
By Sailendra Nath De, p. 42.

The ravishing beauty of a "Rainbow in the sky" is painted in verse 15th with exquisite imagery: and has been visualized by Sri Sailendra Nath De in a powerful and convincing composition :

"Eastward, where various gems with blending ray
In Indra's bow over yonder hillock play
And on the shadowy form such radiance shed,
As peacock's plumes around a Krishna spread."
(H. H. Wilson)

This is beautifully visualized in the expansive landscape drawn by Sailen De. The arch of the Rainbow builds an impressive halo over the series of cliffs fringed with verdure, knit together in one compact mass.

The capital city of Vidisā and its river Vetravati are etched in a few summary lines :—

"There shalt thou see the Royal Magic city known
Afar and win the lover's fee complete.
If thou subdue thy thunders to a tone
Of murmuring gentleness, and taste the sweet,
Love-rippling features of the river at thy feet."
(Ryder XXIV, p. 189)

The Hill known by the name of Nichai is visualized in its horripilation expressed in riots of Kadamva blossoms :—

"A moment rest on Nichais' mountains there,
Where madder-bushes don their blossom coat
As thrilling to thy touch ; where city men
Over youths' unbridled pleasure fondly gloat
In caverns whence the perfumes of gay women float."
(Ryder XXV, p. 190)

A rivulet spouting out from the Vindhya hill is thus described :

"The neighbouring mountain stream that gliding grants
A glimpse of charms in whirling eddies pursed,
White noisy swans accompany her dance
Like a twinkling zone, will slake thy loving thirst—
A woman always tells her love in gestures first."

(XXVIII, p. 190)

One verse (41) describing the shadow of the Cloud cast on the surface of the River Gambhirā is pictured by Sailen De, in a faithful pictorial parallel :—

"Now to Gambhirā's wave thy shadow flies
And on the streams pellucid surface lies
Like some loved image faithfully impest
Deep in the maiden's un-sullied breast."

The Celestial Landscape is sometimes embroidered by the flying figures of Siddha couples who step aside in fear of the strings of their *Vina* being spoiled by rainy drops from the moving cloud :

"Adore the reed-born god and speed away
While Siddhas flee, lest rain should put to shame
The lutes which they devoutly love to play ;
But pause to glorify the stream whose name
Recalls the sacrificing emperor's blessed fame."

(Ryder XLV, p. 194)

The picture of the River Sindhu under the shadow of the Descending cloud is described in another verse :—

"Narrow the river seems from heaven's blue
And gods above who see her dainty line
Matched, when thou drinkest with thy darker hue,
Will think they see a pearly necklace twine
Round Earth, with one great sapphire in its midst ashine."

(Ryder XLVI, p. 194)

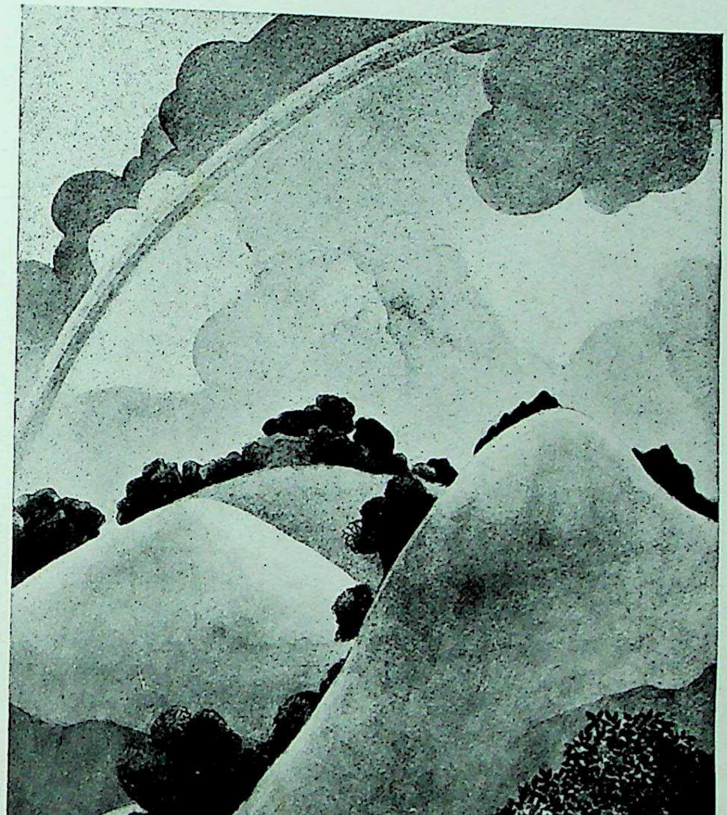


Fig. 3. "Rainbow in the Sky" (Megha-duta)
By Sailendra Nath Dey, p. 43.

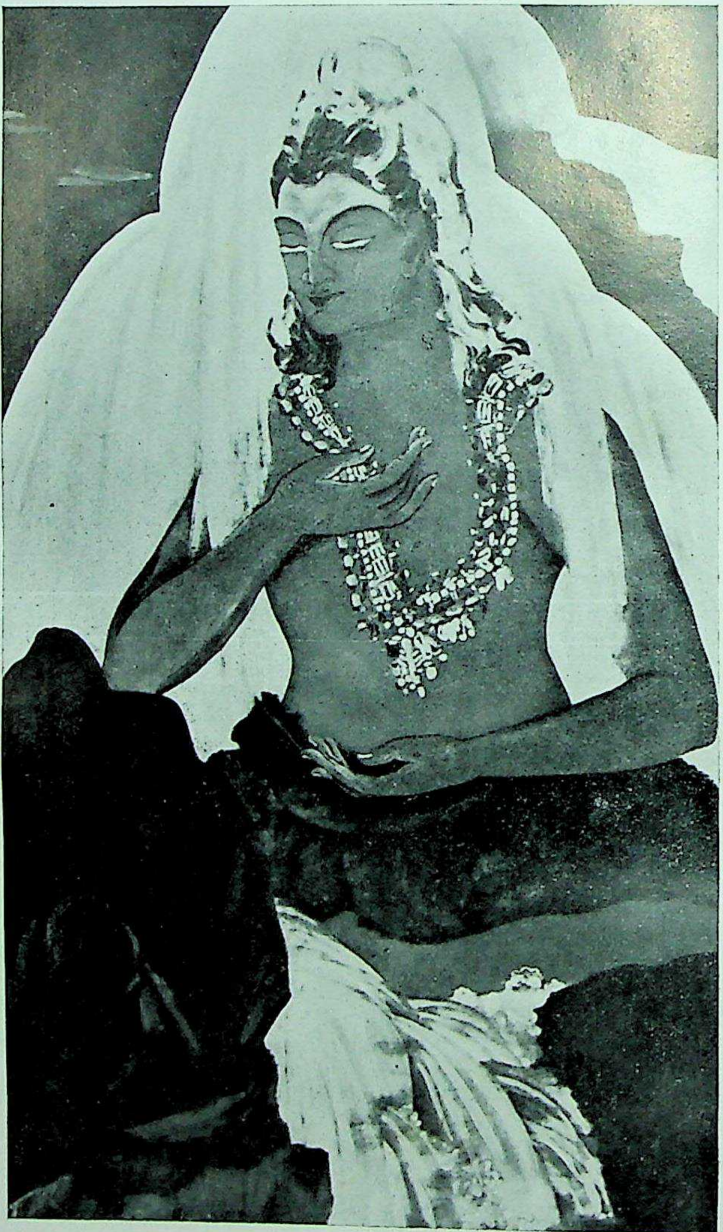


Fig. 4. Descent of the Ganges
By Navendra Nath Tagore, p. 46.

The sources of the river Gangā near the sacred site of Kankhal are described in two verses :

"Fly then where Ganges over the king of mountains
Falls like a flight of stairs from heaven let down
For the sons of men ; she hurls her billowy fountains
Like hands to grasp ( ? ) the moon on Shiva's crown
And laughs her foamy laugh at Gauri's jealous frown."
(Ryder L, p. 195)

This is illustrated in a moving miniature by the brush of Sailen De.

"If thou, like some great elephant of the sky,
Should wish from heaven's eminence to bend
And taste the crystal stream, her beauties high—
As thy dark shadows with her whiteness blend—
Would be what Jamnā's waters at Prayāga lend."
(Ryder LI, p. 195)

The snowy heights of the Kailasa in the Himalayas are glimpsed in the sparkling words of the famous verse :—
Translations :

"Seek then Kailasa's hospitable care,
With peaks by magic arms asunder riven,
To whom, as mirror, goddesses repair
So lotus-bright his summits cloud the heaven,
Like form and substance to god's daily laughter given."
(Ryder LVIII, p. 196)

Sometimes modern artists attempt to visualize the white peaks of the Himalayas not in the realistic picturization of the snowy mountain but to render its magnificent grandeur through the mythical form of the Image of Śiva as the only appropriate incarnation of the snowy landscape.

Thus in a pictorial presentation of the Himalayas by Navendra Nath Tagore we are shown Śiva as the great Yogi decked in the necklace of bones, seated on the shoulders of the hill in a Yogic posture, in a spiritual trance, in absolute self-forgetfulness, without any consciousness that the white and glistening cascades of the Waters of Ganga descend from his matty locks, passing over his two shoulders and emerge under his feet to fall on the bosom of the earth to run into the sea through thousands of miles of the Gangetic plain.

Here the Descent of the Ganges is not given in a visual landscape but in the imaginative form of a plastic imagery.

Another Modern artist, Khitindra Nath Mozumder, has pictured the form of the River Ganga through a similar plastic Imagery, visualizing the sacred River in the figure of a Lady, dressed in the customary clothes current in the Uttara Pradesa. In the rhythmic lines of her white skirt, the typical costume of Northern India, there is perhaps a suggestion of the rhythmic flow of the waters of the Ganges. She stands below a beautiful hillock from which she appears to have just descended, from the matted locks of Siva. The trees and plants, delicately painted, appropriately embroider an imaginary incarnation visualized by the artist.

As a companion picture, the same artist has painted the River Yamuna in the form of a dark-complexioned damsel seated under a tree with her head picturesquely decked with a profusion of Wild flowers holding a lotus in her hand, richly picked out by a row of white bangles, which set off the beauty of her dusky skin which perhaps symbolize the turbid waters of the river Jamna as we know her.

Other artist of the Tagore school have painted various aspects of Nature through diverse imaginative manners as we find in

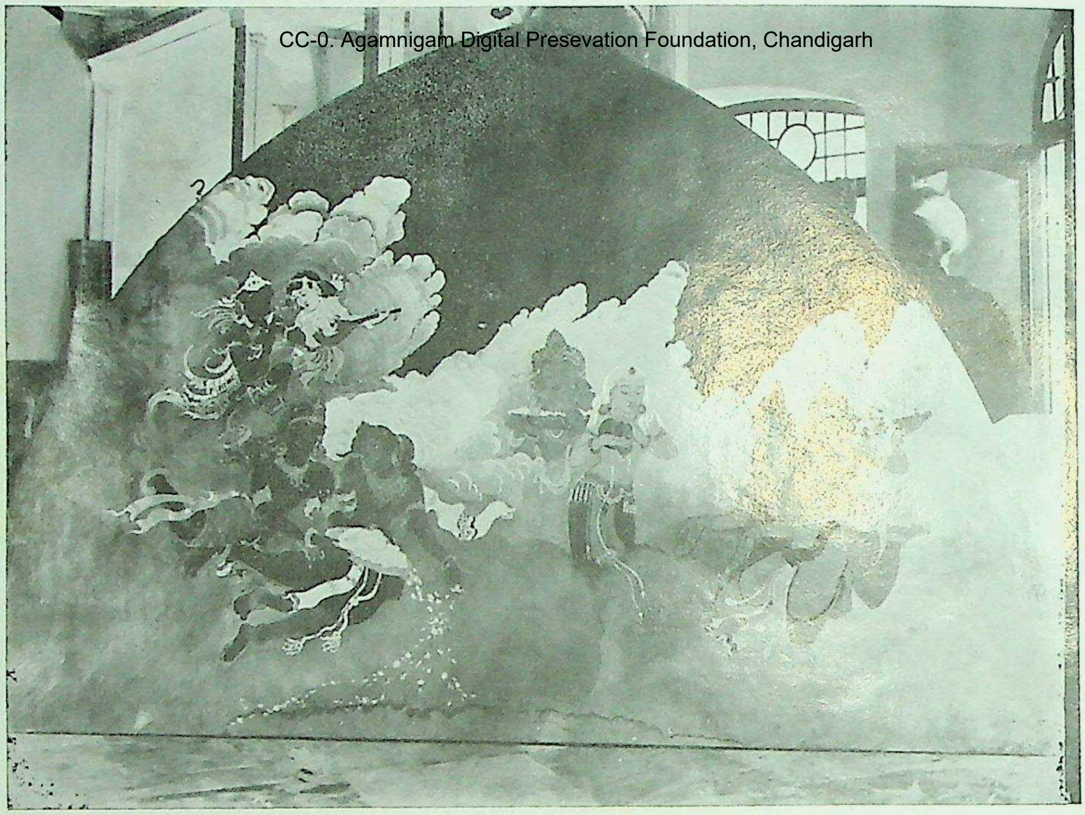


Fig. 5. Swarba (Heavens). By Asit Kumar Haldar, p. 47.

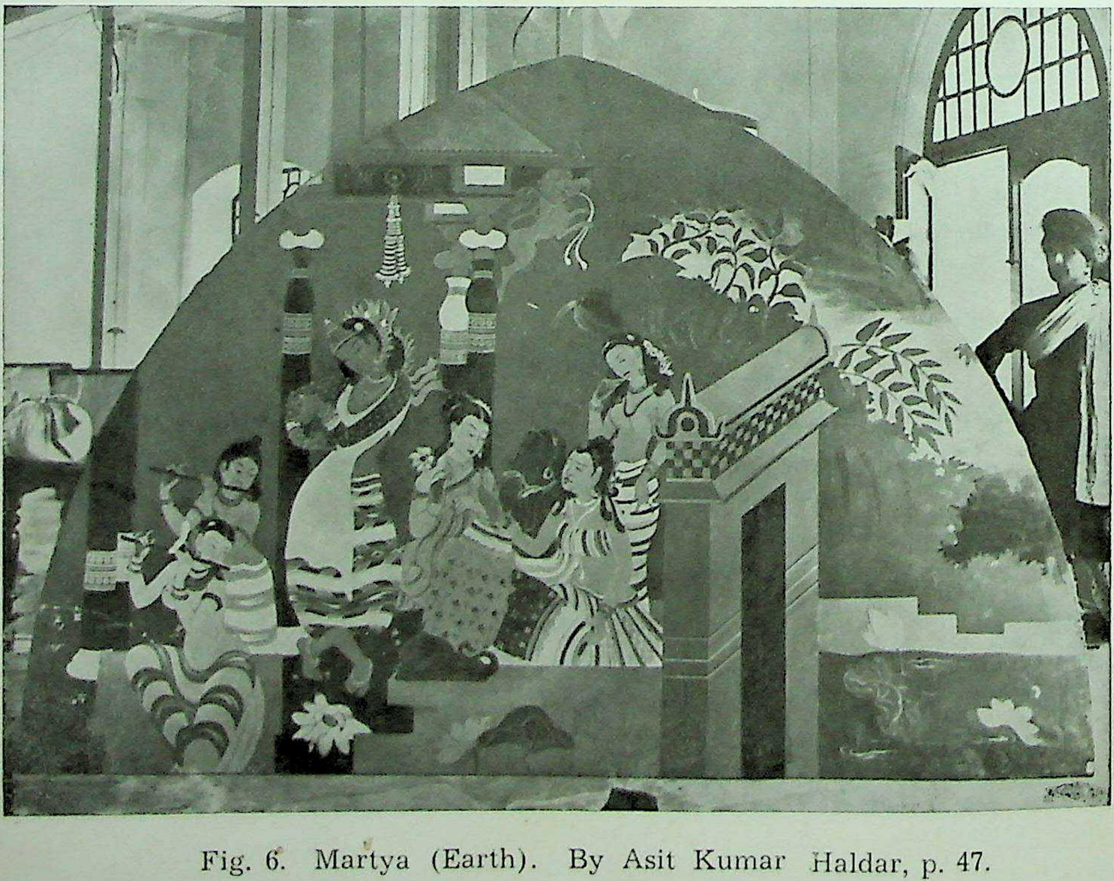


Fig. 6. Martya (Earth). By Asit Kumar Haldar, p. 47.

this picture of the "Cloud-lands," visualized by a former Principal of the Government School of Art in this city :—

This is a large piece of Canvass designed several years ago on the occasion of the king's visit to India.

It is undoubtedly a distinguished piece of work giving us a view of the cloud-lands as vaporous forms of silvery white pushing their conical waves against the background of the rich blue skies presented in emphatic contrast of the White and the Blue. But the artists' idea of the clouds is not a mass of empty vaporous world but a world richly populated by gods, angels, Gandharvas, Kinnaras and other celestial beings, who float about in this dreamland, sometimes showering their blessings on human heads through flowers and other celestial gifts.

This is one of a Triptych—Swarga, Martya and Pātāl—The three essential forms of landscape as understood in the sacred cosmology of the Indians.

The Second picture gives us a presentation of the flat surface of the Earth—realised in terms of trees, plants and lotus-lake, on the one hand, and on the other hand of houses, buildings and gateways giving us a glimpse of the joyous life of human beings, engaged in the happy occupation of songs and dances, inside their man-made habitation ; the details of these are evidently borrowed from the architectural data in the frescoes of the Ajanta caves. This ideal presentation of life on earth makes us sigh for the vanished life of Mediaeval India which according to many of our poets was one perpetual programme of songs, dances, and laughters.

There is a presentation of the Pātāl, the Nether Regions of the earth, which our mythology describes as a 'Region of the Waters' which sustain vegetation. The artist has visualized the Nether World in the form of the surging waves of the seas, which mythical beings like Yaksas and Nagas love to explore to gather the riches, pearls, gems, and corals and various kinds of rare jewels symbolized in the phrase *Āshta-Nidis.* We can see at the upper part the crowned figure of a Yaksa carrying his basket of gems gathered of the picture from the depths of the waters. The sea has been painted with a good deal of astonishing realism and romantic charm.

Other modern artists prefer to depict the cloudlands in less imaginative and in more realistic manners and sometimes bringing the Earth and the Heaven in very close manners and sometime bringing the Earth and the Heaven in very close relationship as in this intimate picture of a cluster of huts nestling below the last rays of the fading sun protected by the moving foliages of a row of trees which melt into the receding lines of a beautiful evening landscape carefully seen and faithfully visualized.

Several Indian artists have tried to see the beauties of Indian sceneries through the magic spectalcles of a Turner, a Constable, or a Leader. Of these groups of early pioneers the name of the late Jamini Prakas Gangoly deserves special mention. He became famous by continually presenting Himalayan Landscape and 'Evening scenes' on the River Padma which are still remembered by connoisseurs of landscape-painting.

We have chosen to cite here one of his less known study of a marshy landscape which has all the qualities of a Leader, if not, a Corot.

The reflected light which the shallow waters of the marshy land brighten up the composition broken by stretches of zig-zag lines. These emphatic bits of lighted surfaces are contrasted and skilfully thrown into relief by the shadowy forms of the distant trees which invest the scene with a weird and mystic significance.

A moonlight scene from the brush of Gogonendra Nath Tagore is a tiny little masterpiece in the mystic manner of the French

Impressionists. Yet it is in an original and individual way that the artist has conveyed his impression and memory of the scene, without imitating any other artists. The shadowy form of a poet is seated on the edge of the Sea-beach, in the soft pale moon-light, streaming through the veils of a passing cloud. The waves of the sea are suggested rather than delineated by two patches of white near the seated figure bringing into relief the shadowy form of the poetic figure.

The outstanding merit of the piece is its quality of restraint. So many things have been said with so few touches. An inferior artist would have spoiled the picture by too much details and too much description. Here the essentials of the Landscape have been set forth with a very few strokes and touches.

We cannot omit to refer here to the distinguished work of the late Lalit Mohan Sen, the former Principal of the Government School of Art, Lucknow. This versatile artist has revealed his merits in different phases of pictorial Art—particularly in Portrait painting, Wood block printing, and Lino-cuts. But in the field of landscape painting his works deserve special commendation. One of his best landscapes that I can cite here—'Fisherman Drawing His Net'—will convince anybody of his keen eye to catch visions of beauty in significant subjects and to render such vision with consummate executive skill.

The history of Indian landscape-painting in Ancient and Mediaeval Art will be covered by the next chapter.

## THIRD LECTURE :

# LANDSCAPE IN INDIAN SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

Having seen and discussed how Landscape has been understood in Indian Literature, and poetical compositions, and how it has been treated and presented in terms of verbal descriptions —we are now in a position to explore the data as they appear in visual presentations in Sculptural and Pictorial Art in different periods of Indian Art in its many historical evolutions. The late Dr. Abanindranath Tagore our greatest Indian painter of modern times had used a technical term to indicate landscape or scenic representation. That is a Sanskrit word *Sthānaka Chitra*. Very probably the term had been discovered by him in some *Śilpa sāstra* text. But he had given us no indication of the source from which he had derived this indigenous technical word for Landscape. We can understand the term to mean some depiction of a particular presentation of some particular place (*sthāna*) which can be identified and recognized very probably in the sense of the English phrase a 'topographical scene'. But we know that the English word Landscape is used in a much more extensive sense than a topographical scene. That is to say when the presentation of a particular recognizable scene is lifted: above the plane of its well known and familiar human use as a piece of habitation associated with our prosaic and utilitarian needs, then, that particular place or scene, put to our daily selfish use and enjoyment of particular individuals, become invested with a spiritual purpose namely an object or motive of disinterested pleasure in contemplating and enjoying the elements of the scene as a composition of pure Visual Beauty, disassociated with any practical use or selfish human needs as a piece of useful habitation, then such presentation attains the superior position of a piece of Landscape to be enjoyed and appraised for its own sake, as a piece of beautiful composition of significant lines and moving colours.

Scenic representations can be divided into different categories. One can be the presentation of a place where we build our homesteads and live our daily life, another scene may present the place where we can indulge in our outdoor games and athletic sports, yet another, which gives us an extensive area suitable for our enjoyable walks and excursions, a piece of pleasance, beneficial for our physical health and bodily enjoyment. Yet there is another category of scenes on which we can open our eyes and to which we can open our hearts for disinterested contemplation and meditation.

Thus scenes of Nāture can be used and have been frequently used (as we have seen in our First Lecture) as a subordinate background or foil to minister to the selfish needs of our daily life. Yet, in spite of the fact that our Good Earth and its scenic representations may illustrate the uses and applications of our selfish ends, in Pictorial Art only that category of Landscapes is prized and valued for their higher significance and uses, which help us to think and to indulge in disinterested reveries which help us to build our subjective life of Contemplation, our spiritual life of Meditation and Introspection.

In the History of European Pictorial Art though Landscape-painting did not come into existence from very early times, the Art had been placed on a pedestal of honour by critics and connoisseurs who have built up a respectable body of Literature for European Painting.

There is a general belief that Indian Art has not much cared for presenting Landscapes and that the duty or necessity of depicting Natural Scenes appears to have been avoided and passed over. The

Indian artists appear to have neglected the physical facts and visual aspects of Natural scene, and they had chosen and exploited the subtle, finer, subjective and spiritual phases of Nature for treatment in plastic art and in the motives of their art practices.

But Indian Art has derived its inspiration from and is based on the fundamental philosophy that there is no basic difference between Human, Animal, and Vegetable life and the indication of differences in these divergent manifestations of life is provided by the relative quantum of the vital fluid running through these different manifestations. Whatever may be the relative difference in the stock of physical energy in Man and Animal, the process of vital actions is identical and the two forms of life are on the same path of pilgrimage on the road of evolution each striving to reach, to know, and to perceive the inherent Divine Principle permeating extensively in all forms of life and all patterns of manifestations in their shining and bewildering varieties. The animate and the inanimate forms of creation (as demonstrated by Sir Jagadish Ch. Bose) are equally responsive to physical and spiritual stimulations.

In this way the philosophical concept of the identity of different manifestations of life was applied to the practices of Indian Visual Art. The art practitioners refrained from an accurate prosaic physical delineations of both animate and inanimate forms and the vision of the Indian Artirt was never affixed on the realistic forms of the various types of human and non-human life, so that, to gaze on the realities and details of physical forms was never the ideal of his art.

Nevertheles the fundamental principles of depicting natural scenes were discovered in India long before they were found in Europe.

From one point of view, Landscape-painting describes and depicts the gross and visual elements of natural scenes. From another point of view one can perceive that Landscape art has undertaken to reveal and depict the inherent subjective and secret phases of forms hidden behind the physical appearances of the scenes of Nature. Man cannot glimpse or visualize these fundamental and hidden scerets unless he can dissociate and disentangle himself from his physical environment, unless he can free himself from the extensive overwhelming panoroma of Nature through a restrained, discriminative and disciplined vision and unless he can develop a vision to look at Nature with a free and independent out-look from a respectable distance away from the blandishments of the physical Beauties of Nature. Man can only acquire this disinterested and independent vision when man succeeds in freeing himself from the entrancing serpent—coils of Heaven and Earth —of Cloudlands and Uplands and take up an independent position and view-point to survey the natural scenes. Then and then only Man is born a free child with its freshness of vision released from the binding rope of the beauties of Heaven and Earth. Then neither the eternai beauties of Paradise nor the near views of the Pedestrian on Earth, can dominate the freedom of outlook of the free-born child.

In a narrow objective sense the Art of Landscape is a mere substitute for a direct contact with Nature. When the original is not present before our eyes the painted imitation of the Forms of Nature pleases our mind and we attempt to taste the quality of the original through the imitation. When we are seated indoors Landscape-painting gives us an opportunity to peep into the entrancing beauty and the glory of the World outside.

Without moving an inch from our seat, indoors, we are enabled to spread our wings to fly about in the free limitless expanse of the cloudlands through the magic skill of Landscape-painting aided by the amazing artistry of line and colour and the entrancing play of lights and shadows.

If we attempted a Definition of Landscape we might say that it is a three-dimensional presentation of the scenes of Nature with a proper apprehension of space, depth, and distance. In narrow sense, Landscape is distinguished from Sea-scape. But the best definition of Landscape is one which characterized Landscape as the presentation of "Eternity between Heaven and Earth", Eternity, here standing for an indefinite and limitless extension keeping in view the essential elements of the composition of a Landscape namely,—space, depth, and distance, foreground, background and sky-line and the upper regions of space, or, in objective terms, water, earth, trees, rocks and clouds.

We find that in Early Asiatic Art to which Early Indian Art is related by many links and contacts Landscape in its essential elements has been understood and interpreted from pre-historic times.

If we now turn from literary descriptions of Landscape to the rendering of Nature-scenes—in Plastic and Visual Art—we find that Landscape Art had a very early tradition not only in Indian, but also in much earlier and older Western Asiatic Art.

The earliest example that we have been able to trace is a specimen from a Seal coming from an early site in Mesopotamia—datable about 3000 years before Christ (Fig. 7). Here we have a pastoral scene with a pair of Ibex which help to build up a charming composition. The first Ibex is in the background resting in a still pose. The second one in the foreground is stooping to drink from the brink of a rivulet the banks of which are indicated by wavy lines near the extreme lower end of the picture. On either sides of the kneeling Ibex, we have two little mounds, symbolizing hillocks from the top of which emerges a couple of trees, with rhythmic waving branches with very little leaf or foliage. In relation to the size of the hillocks the heights of the trees are rather disproportionate but this has been necessary in order to fill up the space for the Primitive artist is always afraid of leaving any empty space. Though the sky-line is not actually rendered there is a simple sense of space, and distance, and a restful lyrical presentation of Nature has been very skilfully given in this archaic Landscape with the very crude primitive resources available to the prehistoric artist. In another piece of Early West Asiatic Art (Fig. 8) we can trace the ancient history of Landscape in Asia. This is quaint drawing on a piece of Elamite Seal, attributed to the period of late Uruk or early Jumdat Nasr of the approximate data of 3000 years Before Christ. Obviously, it is the picture of a river winding through a valley, bordered on either side, where space permits, by rows of trees, or clumps of vegetation. While the rows on the far side of the bank point towards the bottom of the picture. This is necessary for, if they were placed with their heads upwards they would intercept our view of the running water. The movement of the water is suggested by the motion of the running fishes, following each other in one long chain covering the whole length of the river with an awkward bend at the centre. It should be noticed that the inside anatomy of each fish is rendered by crude scratches revealing the structures of the bones as in an X-ray photograph. Though rendered in the Language of the crude artistic convention of the Primitive artist the Landscape is depicted with great, vivid and graphic power of narration, accompanied by a sensitive vision.

A Third representation of Landscape in West Asiatic Art (Fig. 9)—a relief engraved on a silver vase discovered in Kourgan of Maikop (Kuban District, Russia) has been assigned by Joseph Strzygowski to three hundred years B.C. It is a remarkable visua-

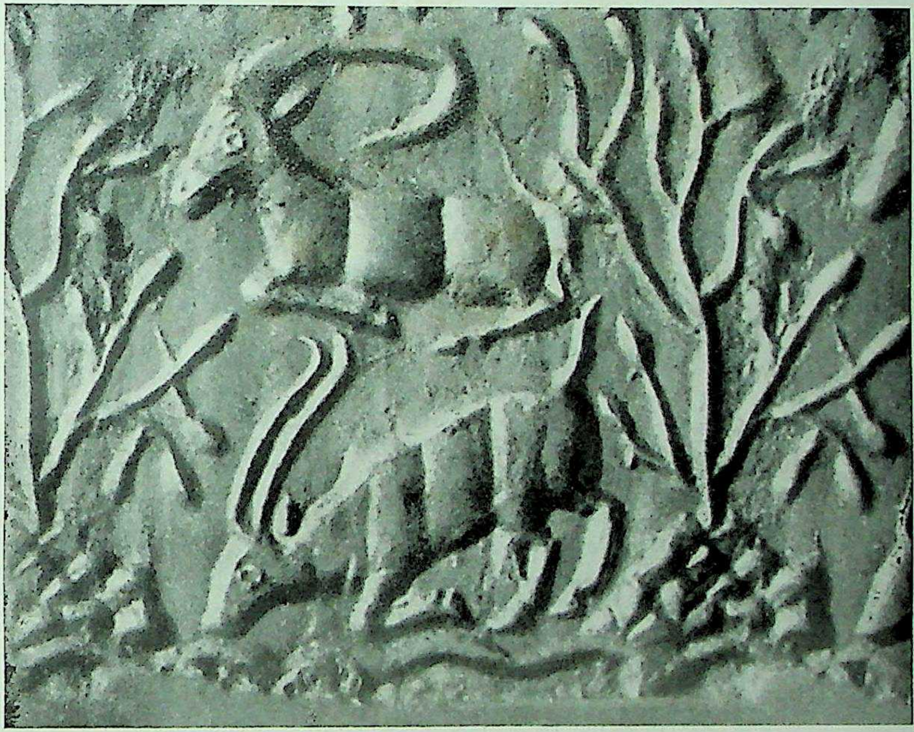


Fig. 7. A Pair of Ibex, Pastoral Scene
Seal from Mesopotamia, p. 55.

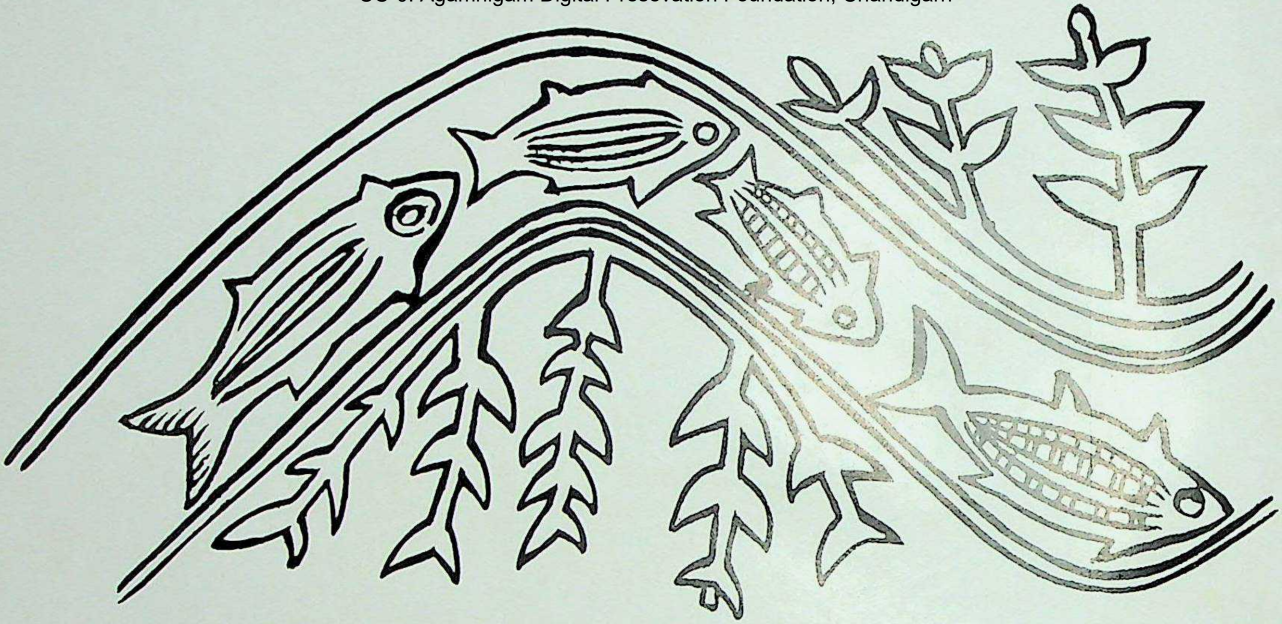


Fig. 8. A River-Scene. An Elamite Seal, p. 56.

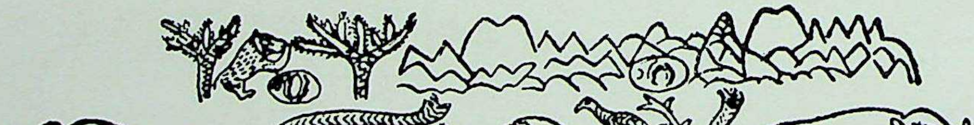


Fig. 9. A Silver Vase From Maikop (Russia), p. 56.

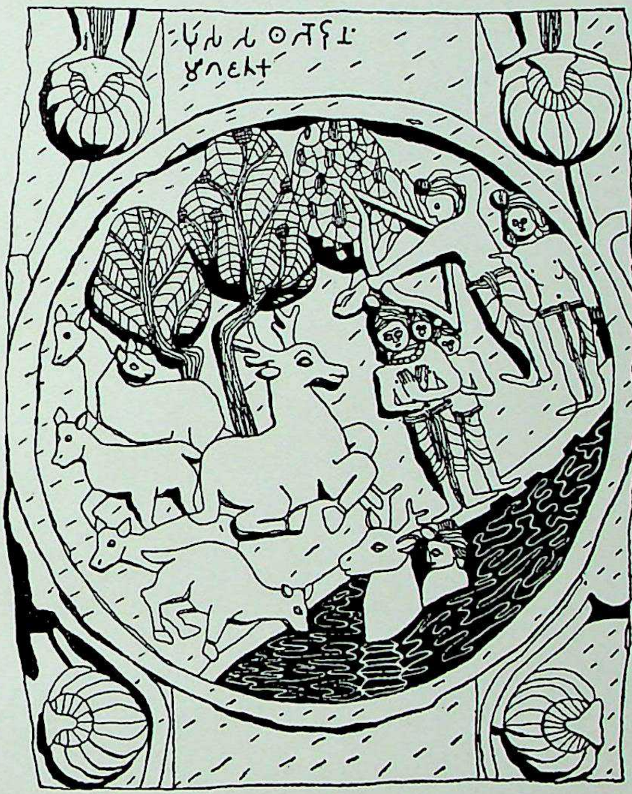


Fig. 10. Antelopes On a River-bank
Mriga-Jataka, Bharhut, p. 57.

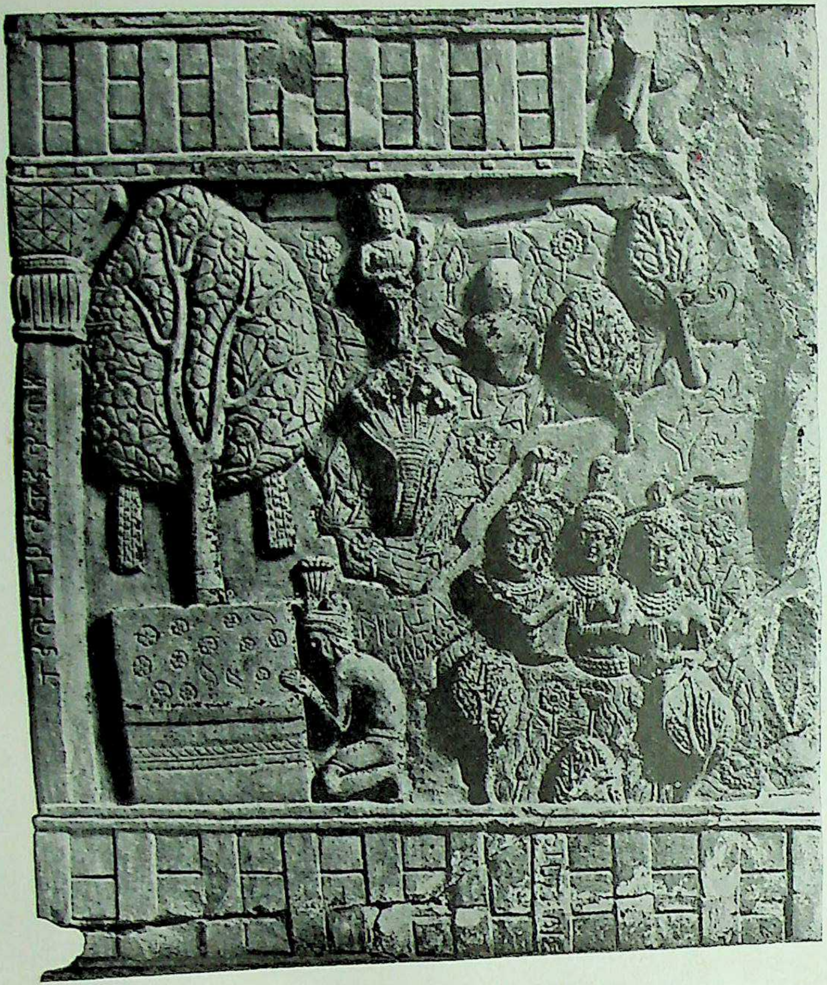


Fig. 11. Naga-Raja Elapatra, Bharhut, p. 58.

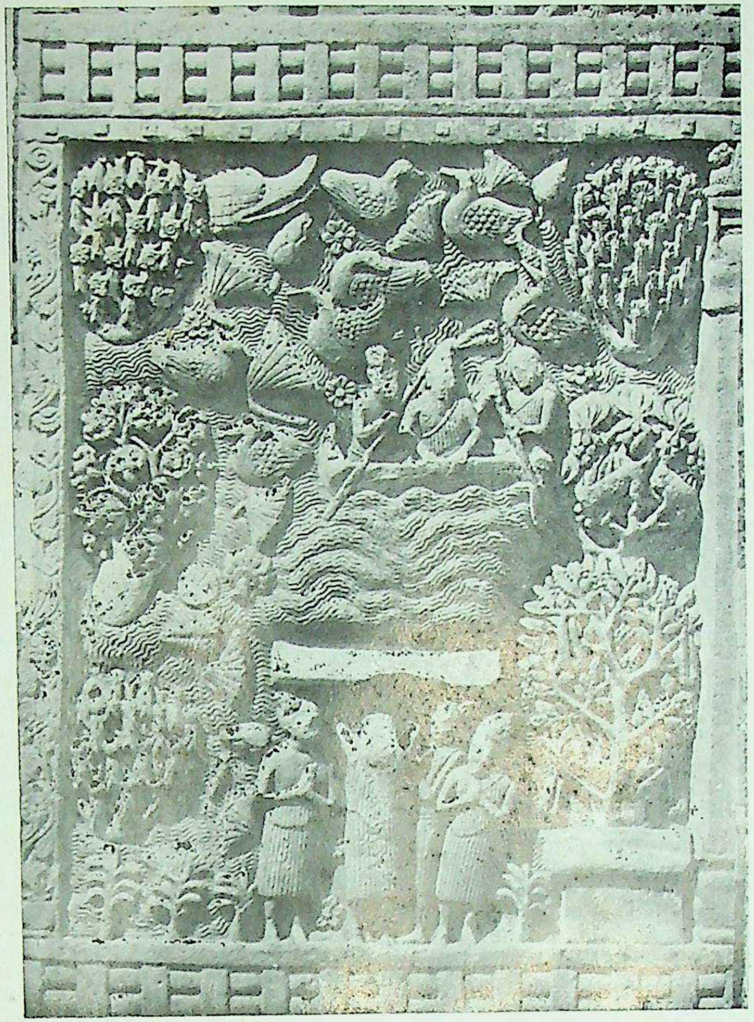


Fig. 12. River Scene, Sanchi, p. 59.
Miniature Representing a Rivulete.

lization of an expansive nature scene depicting at the top a series of hills flanked by trees from the hills descend two rivers which unite in a lake in the foreground, encircling a large plateau across which various animals roam, some stopping to drink at the brink of the river. This style of delineation of Landscape has been attributed to the early stage of Iranian Art (Mazdaic). This Iranian convention appears to have penetrated as far East as Buddhist Japan as can be demonstrated by analogous presentation, depicting a wild scene with tigers hunting antelopes on the painted cover of the famous Tamamushi cofferet in the collection of the Horyuji Temple of Nara (see discussion of the topic in Appendix II). At any rate it is clear that the Landscape appears for the first time in Mesopotamia and other related West Asiatic regions.

There is no direct evidence yet available to link the West Asiatic Iranian traditions with Indian representation of Landscape.

Coming now to specimens of Indian delineation of Landscape we find that in phases of early Indian Art—datable about second century B. C.—we find certain definite conventions and formulas have been devised to render Landscapes which, though analogous to early Western Asiatic forms, have distinctive devices of their own.

Thus, in an Illustration from *Miga-Jataka* (Fig. 10) a legend from the previous Birth-stories of the Buddha—depicted on one of Pillar-Medallions from Bharhut—we have an archaic and somewhat *naïve* rendering of a pastoral scene giving within the utmost brevity of means owing to exigencies of space available in a circular medallion. The artist had to tell the story and introduce all the necessary *dramatis personae,* and the Landscape comes in as a necessary context to the story. Yet the artist has been able to give us at least the three essential elements of a Landscape—

earth, water, and trees. At the extreme lower end, we have a rivulet or lake in which a man himself immersed in water is giving one of thc antelopes a bath, while another is stooping to drink. A lake in the Indian convention must have lotuses for a *sarovara* is always a *padma-sarovara.* And we have the ripples of the water indicated by irregular scratches interspersed with the leaves of the lotuses. On the edge of the lake stands a group of men and hunters on one side, and a group of antelopes, on the other, while in the background we have three tall trees in the conventional shapes of lozenges.

Two peculiar conventions of rendering trees have to be noted : (1) First, the upper part of the trunk of the trees which really should be covered by leaves is shown on the surface superposed on the foliage.

(2) Secondly, the leaves and-flowers are rendered not in masses but by individual presentation, leaf by leaf, flower by flower. This convention, as we shall see, will survive to such later times as late as the Moghul Period.

A square panel, in low-relief, from Bharhut (Fig. 11), offers a very interesting study of Landscape in Early Indian Art. In this Illustration of the legend of the Worship of the Buddha by Nāga-Rāja Elāpatra we have a very realistic presentation of a Landscape as far as possible in the primitive technique of this Early Period. In the first place, we notice the conventional rendering of the Bodhi-Tree, over the rectangular platfrom in the foreground the stem of the tree made visible from the root to the top, and the depicting of the foliage, leaf by leaf. But, we have, here, for the first time perhaps, a sense of distance indicated by the Laws of Perspective the distant trees being smaller in size as compared with the one in the foreground. The lake from which emerge the Nāga-King and his two wives, waist-deep in water, is full of lotus-sprays and

and lotus-leaves. The water itself is rendered by wavy scratches while in the extreme corner three whirlpools are shown in conventional lines.

At a little later date—about 50 years Before Christ—we have several representations of Landscapes on the panels of the gateway of the Sanchi Stupa, of which the most well-known is a River Scene with some ascetics standing on the bank watching three other ascetics rowing out on a boat at the centre of the panel (Fig. 12). The waves are rather emphatic and suggest a big river with the inevitable lotuses, and swans, shown at the top. The most important point to notice about this Landscape is that the scene is visualized from a high altitude, which gives a "Birds-eye View". Generally, in European Landscape-painting the view presented is the portion of a scene which can be seen through the eyes of a person standing on the level of the earth, as much as can be seen by a pedestrian (Fig. 13).

In Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Persian Art, and generally in the different phases of Eastern Art, we have a presentation of a wide sweep of things viewed from an elevated position like that of a bird soaring at a high altitude, or of that of a person riding on a horse—*a la cheval*, as they technically call it. This view has been very picturesquely described as "Transcendental Perspective". Here, this elevation, this point of vantage helps the artist to look at things, situated at remote distances which would be shut out by obstructions if viewed by a pedestrian. This view thus obtained from an elevated position is rendered by a peculiar technique, namely, what is further away, or at a remote distance, as the two trees in this panel, is placed at the top in the two corners, and, what is nearest or in the foreground is placed at the bottom of the picture. This convention, as we will find, persists again and again in the later periods of Indian Art,—both in Sculpture and Painting.

The matter may be conveniently explained by a Diagram (Fig. 13). If we attempted to look at things situated at a distance from us, the distant objects would be intercepted by things immediately before us, but, if one flew up into the air, and took "a Bird's-eye View" the portions formerly intercepted will be revealed to the view from the elevated position and we shall be able to survey a larger and more extensive panorama.

In an early damaged panel from Amaravati datable about the first century Before Christ we have a very magnificent bird's-eye view of a forest scene. This forest scene is necessary to be depicted by the demands of the "Story of Six-Tusked Elephant". According to the legend of this *Jataka*, to kill this Elephant with Six Tusks, the King of Benares sent a hunter who is seen at the top of the picture, carrying the Six-Tusked tied on a pole. It is a rocky landscape, the rocks and caves being indicated by rectangular forms, the caves being inhabited by wild beasts while the lake in the foreground is crowded with wild elephants, engaged in playful sports. There are steps leading to the water, and in the spaces between the heads of the elephants peep out lotuses and lotus-leaves. The trees, very much abrased and damaged, are still visible—in globular shapes—attached to long tree trunks sticking out of the crowded composition.

The scene can almost be paraphrased and paralleled by passages in the *Theri-Gāthās.*

On a later panel from Amaravati, we have a glimpse of a corner of a lake—teeming with lotuses—depicted with charming realism and disposed in a variety of position in a lively group with an astonishing vividness and charm. This manner of rendering lakes become a fixed convention in later phases of Indian Art. And in the Jaipur miniatures of the 17th and 18th centuries as well

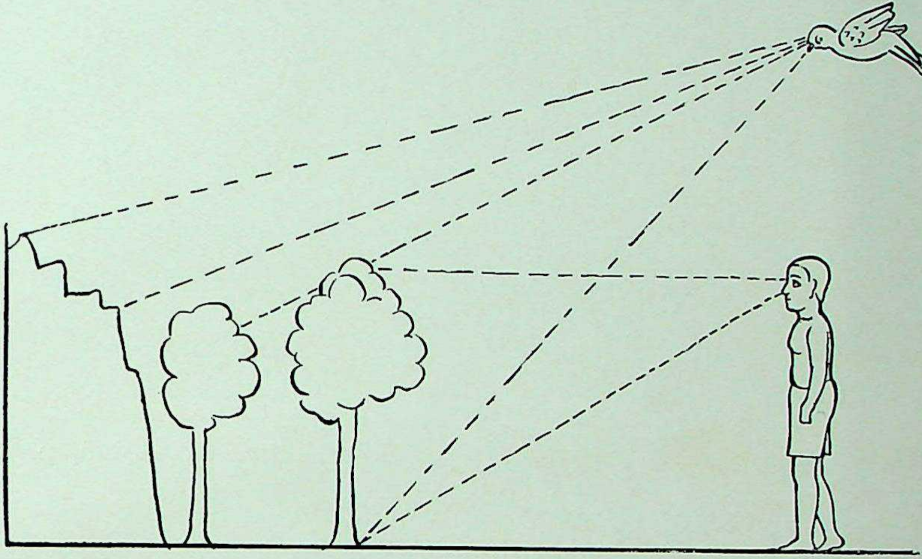


Fig. 13. A Bird's-Eye View, pp. 59-60

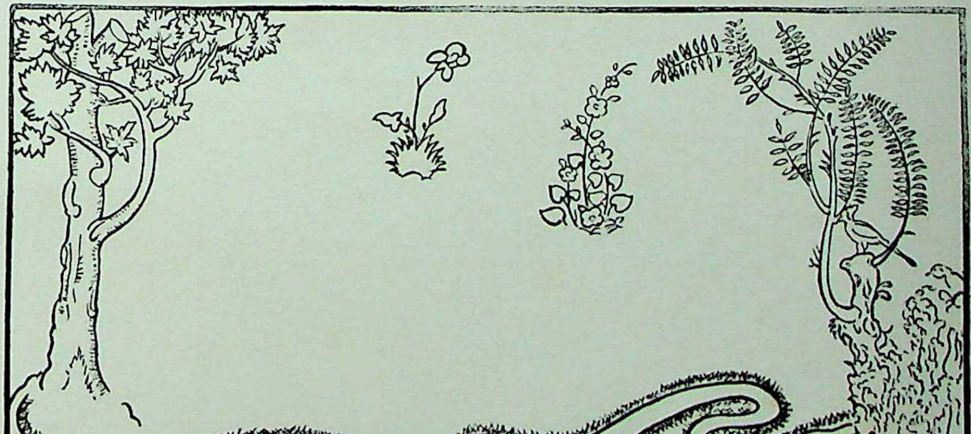


Fig. 14. A Diagram from a Persian

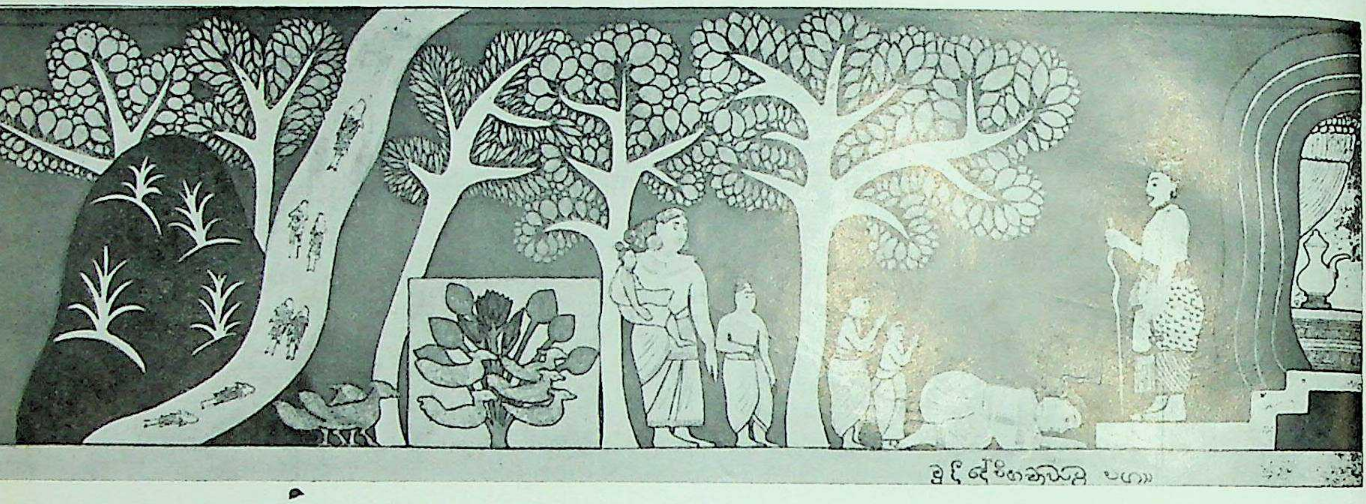


Fig. 15. A Landscape Illustrating a Jataka Degala-Doruval, Ceylon, p. 62.

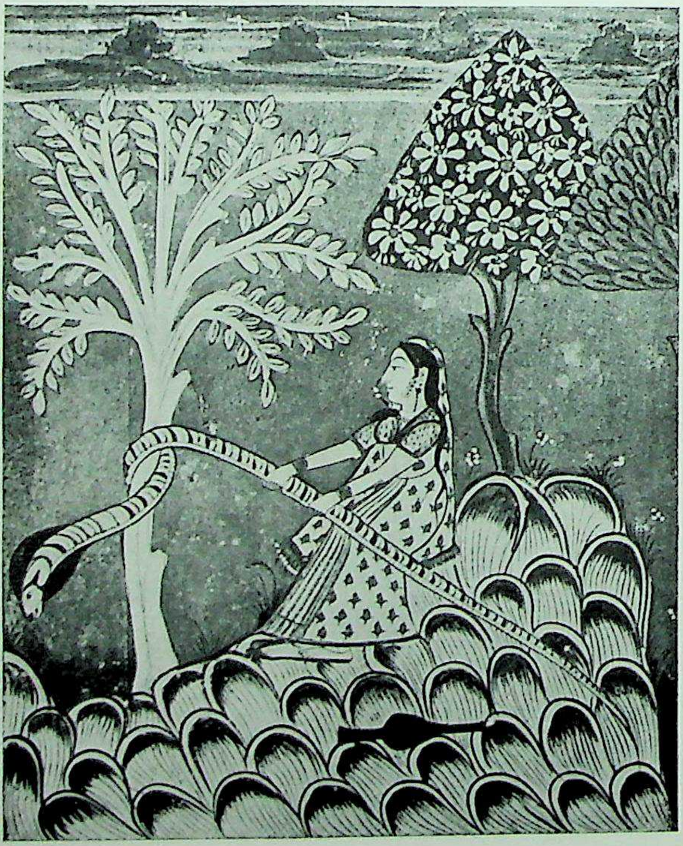


Fig. 16. Ashavari Ragini—on a hillock, p. 62.

as in the early Rāgini paintings—a lake crowded with lotuses in a familiar formulas the ancestory of which has to be traced to this early relief from Amaravati.

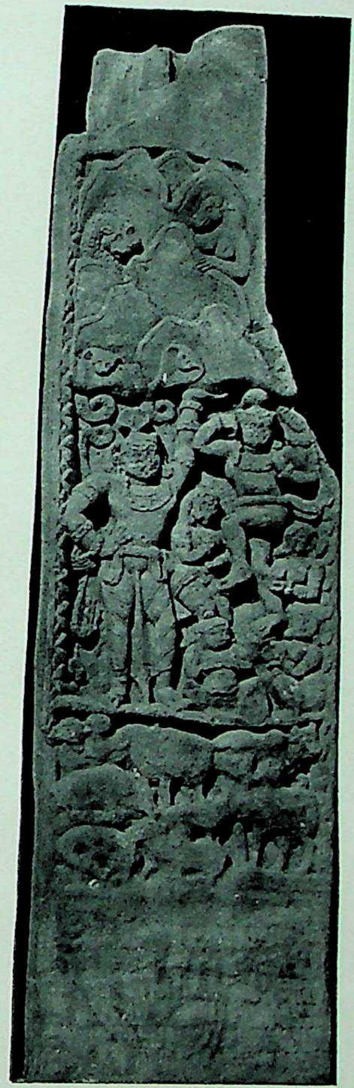
At the risk of a little digression we are citing here a remarkable painted presentation of a Landscape giving an extensive view of a scene of rocks, rivers, trees, and road-ways depicting in an oblòng pannel. It is part of a wall-painting from Ceylon—illustrating a *Jataka*—preserved in a temple at Degala-doruwa in Central Ceylon (Fig. 15). Though painted about the end of the 18th century (1771-1786) the fresco is painted in the archaic language of early Indian Art as we find in this in the treatment of the trees the artist follows the identical conventions we have studied in the Bharhut and Sanchi reliefs. The trunks of the trees shine out in white patches to which the leaves provide a decorative setting. The river flows between the rows of trees planted on both sides of the banks on one of which are two hillocks painted at the corner carrying some trees without any leaves. As repetition of the two flowing lines of the river there are parallel outlines of a road-way depicted on the extreme end of the picture. That it is a road-way not a river is indicated by the marks of running cars left on the road. There is a peculiar tree in miniature size carrying a few birds painted against the background of a white patch square in size between the trunks of two trees.

We will now resume our study of Landscapes as depicted in Early Indian Sculpture on the facade of another carved piece of relief from Amaravati of uncertain date. We have some representations of groups of rocks on which are visible some men wearing peaked caps. We should particularly notice the archaic manner of depicting hillocks in semi-circular shapes—each bounded by double lines round the edge. In the way the two men are reclining on the hillocks remind us of a phrase in one of the *Theri-Gāthās* which refers to these beds of hillocks as "*prastara-sayana*". But this formula of rendering rocks in double circulation lines is very significant as an early precedent of this form of pictorial technique.

In a late miniature of the Rajāsthāni School illustrating Āshāvari Rāgini we notice the identical manner of rendering hillocks which is evidently derived from a very old precedent we have studied in the last picture. The double lines round the edges of the semi-circular forms are emphasized by thick shading to indicate the roundness of this series of large-size pebbles placed in formidable rows one above another. Incidentally we may notice the other elements in this impressive Landscape bristling with three trees each differently treated. At the top we get a glimpse of the distant hills fading away with the sky-line. The sky is suggested by a row of white crosses which suggest the wings of birds soaring high up in the skies.

An instructive piece of early relief from Mathura datable about 1st century B. C. gives us a very lurid picture of a group of hillocks placed in an ascending series one about the other (Fig. 17). They are not depicted in repeated forms of identical semi-circles as in the two last illustraiions. Here, the hillocks are depicted in divergent shapes and positions with some concession to a realistic rendering. The inhabitants of this lurid rocky habitation are an *Aswa-mukhī Yakshinī*, a lion, and a couple of snakes, they are the actors in the story which illustrates a Buddhist *Jātaka.* We are not now concerned with the subject-matter of the story but we are analyzing the early Indian technique and manner of rendering rock sceneries.

A very Important document for our study is provided by the well-known relief (several times reproduced) on the facade of the Cave at Bhaja, datable in the early Sunga period about second



Series, Mathura, p. 62.
Fig. 17. Hillocks in an ascending

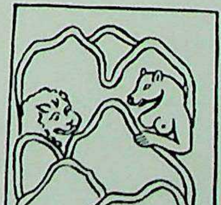


Fig. 18. Detail of above, p. 62.

century B. C. "A royal personage with one attendant seated behind him bearing a standard, is riding on an enormous elephant which is striving over a broad Landscape, and holds aloft in its trunk an uprooted tree. The elephant and its riders are designed on a scale enormously greater than that of the Landscape, and blotting out the greater part of it ; an elephant forming part of the normal Landscape is not much larger than the foot of the great elephant. 'Almost certainly, this is Indra, riding upon his elephant Airāvatā" (Coomaraswamy). So that, we have here two sets of landscapes—a celestial Landscape depicting Indra riding through the air and a mundane prosaic Landscape depicted in much smaller Scale at the bottom of the relief.

Our next illustration is a double row of reliefs from Mathura datable about the first century A. D. (Fig. 19). The top frieze is a familiar Gandhara motif representing Yakshas carrying a garland. But we are not concerned with the top piece and our object of study is the lower panel—probably illustrating the story of a *Jataka*. The story is told in two chapters or sections punctuated and divided by two wicker work structures something like granaries for storing paddy. Let us eliminate the scene with human figures and cut out the right half and concentrate our attention on this section.

Here, we are surprised to find a piece of an almost "Pure Landscape" with no human figures (Fig. 20). We have no doubt we see here a group of antelopes and two other animals. The two antelopes are in very tense poses romping over the rocks which are depicted in parallel series of rectangular blocks. The scene is heightened by two magnificent trees – one on the extreme left and another planted on the extreme right. The left one has many twisted branches carrying large flowers. The right one is made up of the lively leaves of a small palm-plant—very vigorous in its luxurious profusion. It is a compact piece of composition arranged skilfully, the figures of the antelopes standing out emphatically against the vacant space with great dramatic effect. After the stone-carvings of the Mathura School we have to seek materials and data for our study in the famous frescoes of the caves of Ajanta executed mostly between the First and Seventh Century A. D. Uufortunately, though the magnificent wall-paintings of these caves reveal wonderful presentations of many forms of trees, plants, flowers and vegetative life—and occasional glimpses of tiny bits of nature-scenes—they do not provide adequate evidence of the practice of Landscape painting as such, during the Gupta period,

In many of the Illustrations from the *Jataka* we meet with tiny bits of studies of plants and flowers introduced into the spaces between the groups of human figures which crowd into these compositions, as we find in a piece, loaded with fourteen different figures in different postures and actions. But we hardly meet with any piece of large Landscape painted for its own sake. Glimpses of nature-scenes are introduced as foils or backgrounds of figure subjects in the diadactic story-telling scenes of the frescoes of Ajanta. As pointed out by Laurence Binyon, "The Landscape element is tentatively approached, hardly grasped at all." (Yazdani, Ajanta, Vol. I, Text, p. XVII).

But there is a very curions convention of rendering ridges of hills which appears more like a sort of masonry structures or Scaffolding. The Figures here are placed against a background of what looks like brickwork and broken masonry of cubes and rectangles. The ground abutting on the edge of water on which the figures stand is depicted by the curious convention in the shape of indented debris of masonry symbolizing and indicating broken grounds—as we notice—at the lower end of these scenes. As Prof. Strzygowski has pointed out the same convention of rendering rocks and hills, occurs in some mosaics of Ravenna.

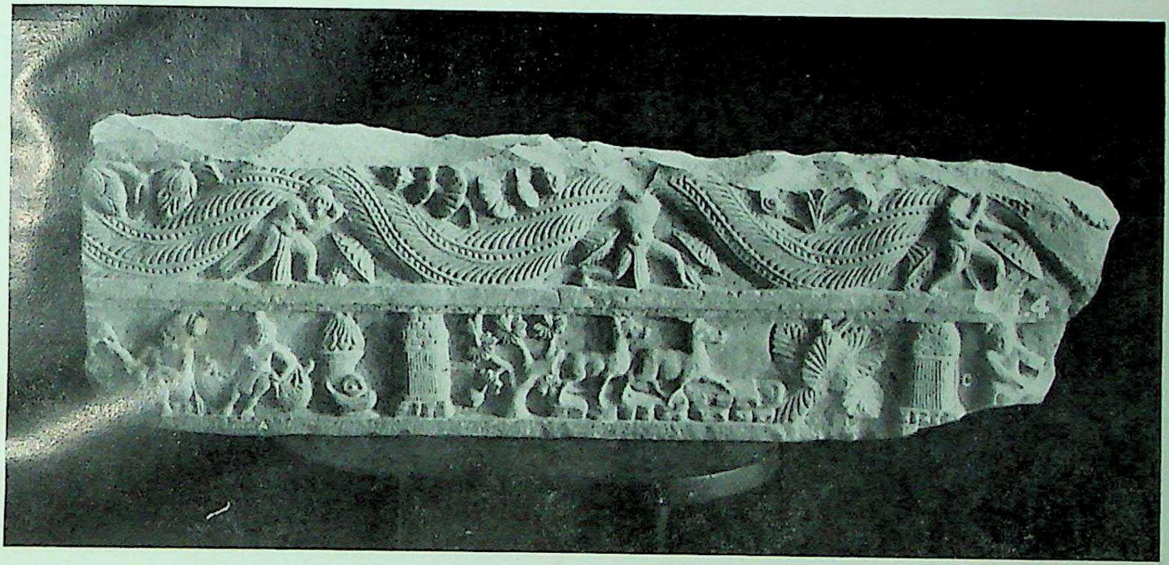


Fig. 19. A Double Row of Reliefs, Mathura, p. 65.

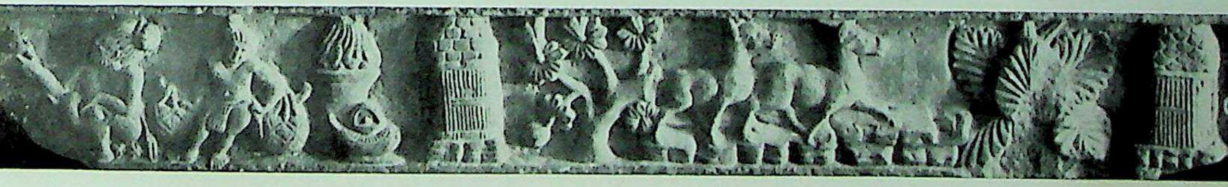


Fig. 20. Detail from above.

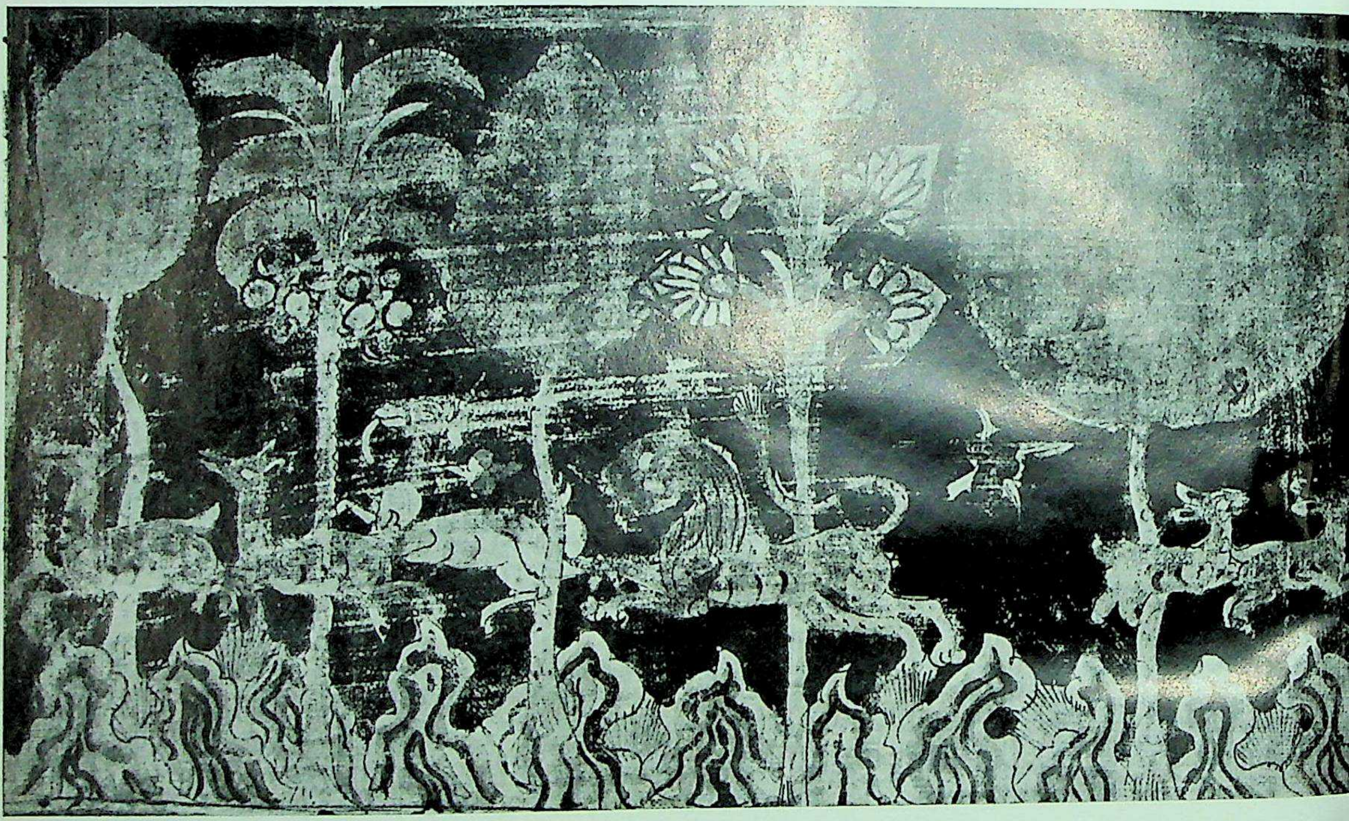


Fig. 21. "Advent of Spring Season" Vasanta-Vilasa, 1452 A.D., p. 66

After the 9th century we have for three centuries several illustrated painted MSS of the Pala Period—but in these pictorial miniatures we do not get anything but subordinate studies of a tree or plant—not any manner of an extensive view of a nature-scene. These documents cover a period terminating in the 12th century.

We now come to data and documents of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries—principally represented by various sepcimens of pictorial art of the Guzerat or Western Indian School. The documents of this period consist of chiefly illustrations of the Life of Parswanath and other romantic stories of the Jaina legends where there is very little scope for depicting natural scenes.

Yet occasionally in these series of icon-painting of the Jaina Canons we now and then get little peeps into nature-scene and glimpses of the elements of Landscape summarily introduced as backgrounds for the figures depicted. Thus in the miniature representing the "Tonsure of Mahavir" on the eve of his Renunciation, when he made over his royal robes to Indra—seated before him and when he tore off his hair, he is represented as seated on a rock under the canopy of an Asoka Tree which touches the sky at the top of the picture. Here we have three elements of a Landscape summarily introduced—(1) the peaks of the hill tops at the extreme lower end of the picture, (2) the rhythmic sway of the tall tree providing a canopy by its foliages and (3) the glimpse of the sky above with clouds represented in wavy patches and outlines.

Our important evidence of the practice of Landscape painting of this period is furnished by a dated document represented by the famous painted Roll of "Vasanta-Vilāsa" written and illustrated at Ahmedabad in 1452 A. D. In this Roll there are several oblong miniatures depicting various phases of nature-scenes—glimpses of gardens, woods and forests.

We are citing here (Fig. 21) a very important piece representing the "Advent of spring season" in the forest. It is a piece of "pure" Landscape without any human figures. The approach of the spring has brought new animation in the vegetable as well as the animal world. And we find not only the trees and plants in a lively mood of agitation but we find groups of wild animals leaping about in harmony with the general feeling of elation which the touch of spring has brought to all forms of life ; the palm and the coconut trees are drawn with a fair amount of realistic accuracy. The other trees are given in shilouette of circular and oblong forms —each leaf being separately indicated the hills are depicted at the bottom of the picture in a series of pyramidal cones—very much in the shapes of tongues of fire. This manner of depicting rocks is a peculiar mannerism of Guzerati Painting.

We can study in an example from a Guzerati miniature of the 15th century the peculiar convention of depicting a Landscape—the rocks formulated in a series of "tongues of fire", the trees depicted with a waving trunk, carrying flowers separately rendered and the sky represented by irregular waves descending to the edge of the horizon indicated by a thick boundary line. The empty space between the sky and the rocks represents the stretch of the earth—the firm land from which rocks and trees rear their heads.

We now come to a very unique piece of evidence in two illustrations of a MS of Jaina Kalpasutra, painted about the 16th century in the pictorial style characteristic of the Western Indian School.

The first one is the only known example of an Indian Landscape-painting without any figures. It is the representation of

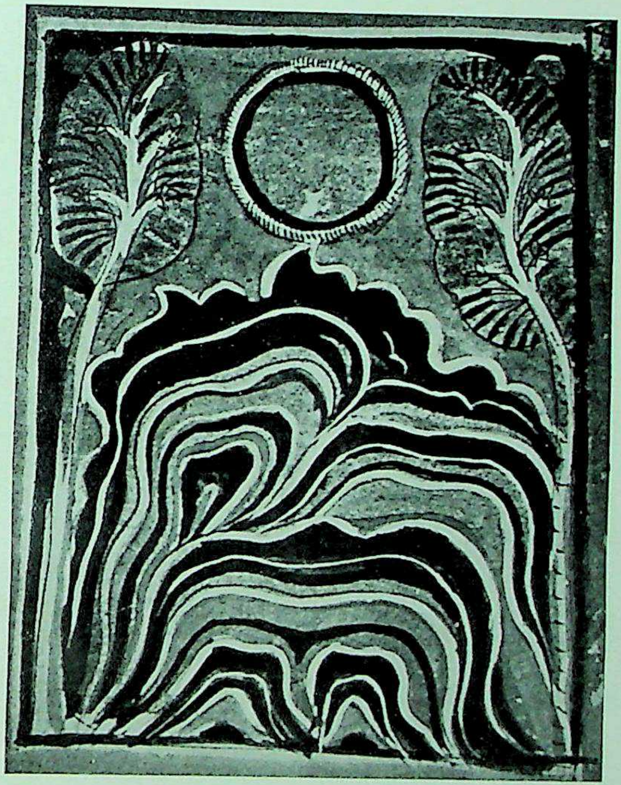


Fig. 22. "Glorious Sun-rise"
(Sri Suryodaya), p. 67.

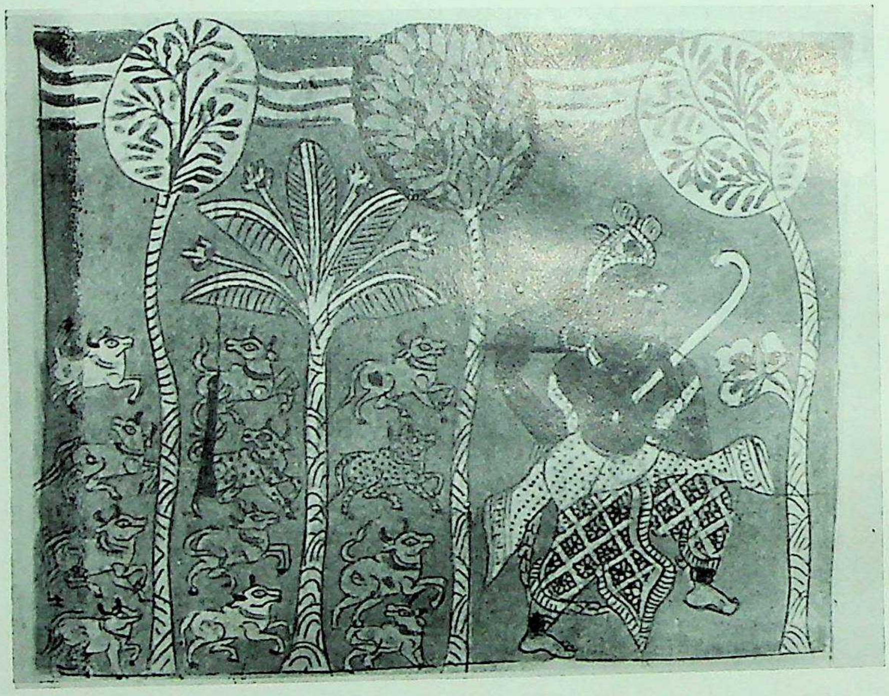


Fig. 23. Landscape from Vala-Gopala-Stuti, 1425 A.D., page 68.

"Glorious Sunrise" (*Śrī-Sūryodaya*) (Fig. 22)—illustrating the rising of the sun on the morning of the conception of Mahavira, following the night in which Queen Triśalā had reported her Fourteen Dreams to King Siddhartha.

The hill above which the Sun rises is represented by a series of irregular and waving lines indicating perhaps the various geological strata of the rocks—the upper outlines being edged by bright outlines in white against dark masses. The strokes of the brushes reveal an astonishing vitality and movement reminding one of the brush-strokes of the great modernistic artist—Van Gogh. The trees on either side of the rock shoot up to the top of the picture. They have foliages of oval shape—the stem being indicated in waving lines—rearing up from the root to the crest—very much in the manner of the reliefs on the Sanchi gateway. The effulgence of the Sun is rendered by a red border which appears black in our photograph. If frankly conventional and symbolical in technique the representation has considerable vitality and grandeur notwithstanding its conventional formula and decorative pattern.

Our next example from the same Manuscript is another powerful Landscape depicting 'Fire on the Rocks' (Frontispiece). It is also an illustration of the dreams of Triśalā. "She saw a fire in vehement motion, fed with much-shining and hone-coloured butter, smokeless and crackling and extremely beautiful with its burning flames. "The mass of its flames, which rose one above the other, seemed to interpenetrate each other, and the blaze of its flames seemed here and there to burn the very sky" *(Kalpa-sutra, 14)*. The illustration follows very closely the verbal description of the text.

In the vigorous rendering of the Fire the picture reminds one of the "Cosmic Fire" of the Rig Veda the First kindling of the Agni—the First Fire lit by the proceeding powers on the occasion of the First Sacrifice, when the Light is brought forth out of Darkness (Coomaraswamy, Boston Museum Bulletin, No. 197, June, 1935, p. 38). The rocks on which the Fire is painted must be Mount Meru, the Vedic *parvata*, coincident with the Axis of the Universe, and trunk of the Tree of Life. It is depicted in the form of an ascending pyramid in three stages diminishing towards the top. The sky is indicated by twinkling stars which are visible between the interestices of the Tongues of Fire.

Altogether, it is a picture of noble simplicity and blazing grandeur of astonishing aesthetic effect.

Another illustrated Manuscript (Fig. 23) of the same School of Guzerati Painting known as *Bāla-Gopālastuti* (datable about 1425 A.D., little earlier than the Vasanta-Vilasa) offers interesting evidence of treating some of the elements of Landscape. This is very probably represents the lifting of the Mount Govardhana (?). Here the mountain visible, over the head of Krishna standing in the midst of the Gopis, is depicted in a Schematic formula like tongues of fire with peaked heads ending in sharp points. The cavities of the rocks are represented by double lines of semi-circles with indications of vegetation. The trees and plants on the shoulders of the rock are drawn with good deal of realism and rhythmic movement giving us a very lively picture of fine decorative effect. At the first sight it is difficult to recognize in this decorative formula the representation of a mountain. But if we omit the group of figures at the centre and concentrate on the upper and lower part of the composition we recognize three elements of a Landscape—the Sky, the Earth, and the Water below.

The lower part of the picture depicts the flowing waters of the river Jamuna. The waves are rendered in a peculiar formula of three curved lines placed in opposite direction giving the effect of a woven mat. To emphasize on the fact that a river is meant to be depicted a row of fishes have been inserted chasing each following the current of the water. This method of depicting Landscape is followed by more realistic modes—followed in the next phase of the developmemt—illustrated in the Ragini miniatures of the Orcha School, which derives much of its formula and technique from the Guzerati School. This new treatment is illustrated in a series of Ragini miniatures depicted in the formula of a Landscape setting.

In order to create an appropriate atmosphere to illustrate the romantic story of the Elopement of Dolā-Māru, an artist from Udaipur has imaginated an impressive Landscape background substituting an imaginative method for the realistic (Fig. 24).

If we ignore for a moment the picture of the eloping couple on the back of the striding camel, painted in the foreground, and study the many details of the Landscape background—then we find that the artist by adopting a fanciful technique has visualized the three elements of the Landscape—the Water, Earth, and the Cloud lands. At the bottom of the picture a piece of water—a lake is summarily indicated by three emphatic lines indicating the bank along which the camel is running with gigantic steps. Then we have the stretch of the earth which swells into the form of a rock rendered in a series of thick emphatic curves against which the heads of the embracing couple show up with great effect. And beyond the outlines of the rocks we see a glimpse of the sky with birds moving just below the fringe of the clouds depicted in a series of concentric curves looking like a piece of woven embroidery. Each piece of cloud is linked up by a chain of spiral lines symbolizing streaks of lightning in a decorative formula. This formula is perhaps derived from a literary source and we can recall a passage from Sudraka's 'Clay-Cart' :—

"The Lightning like waving streamer flies" (Ryder's translation, p. 83).

In a masterpiece illustrating Gurjjarī Rāgini from Basholi (?) given in a charming decorative setting, (not reproduced) we are impressed by the intense and luxuriant beauty of the tree in flower—under which the lady stands in her impeccable white robes talking to her companion. But we have to pass over the attractive group of figures to look at the top to study clouds through a peculiar formula which looks like a canopy built out of forms like those of inverted waves. The usual snaky forms of lightning are introduced in thick delicate lines at the extreme top. A row of thirsty birds *cātakas* (Indian Flamingo) (?) are introduced below the edge of the clouds following the old literary convention that these birds quench their thirst by the first drops of early monsoon clouds and are taken as the harbinger of the rainy season. Though occurring in this miniature which belongs to the early 18th century—this convention of clouds and thirsting *cātakas* is very old.

The antiquity of this convention frequently referred to in Gupta Literature has survived and persisted to very late times. This is typically illustrated in a remarkable composition—occurring in a 17th century Fresco at Bikaner representing clouds, lightning and circling cranes (Fig. 25). The clouds are painted in the conventional forms of lotus leaves in a compact group from which a few pieces have strayed and floated down in a generous gesture to quench the thirst of the circling crane—a *'cātaka-mithuna'*. The background of the space is filled with a series of fine straight lines depicting the streaks of the descending rains. A piece of lightning in a snaky form lights up a portion of the cloud by the penumbra of its light. This is a fine little masterpiece of a rainy Landscape given in all its essence—rain, clouds, and lightning.

As a pictorial motif this convention is of great antiquity and, curiously, it occurs in one of the 9th century Frescoes in one of the caves of Qyzyl in North-Western China beyond the Gobi

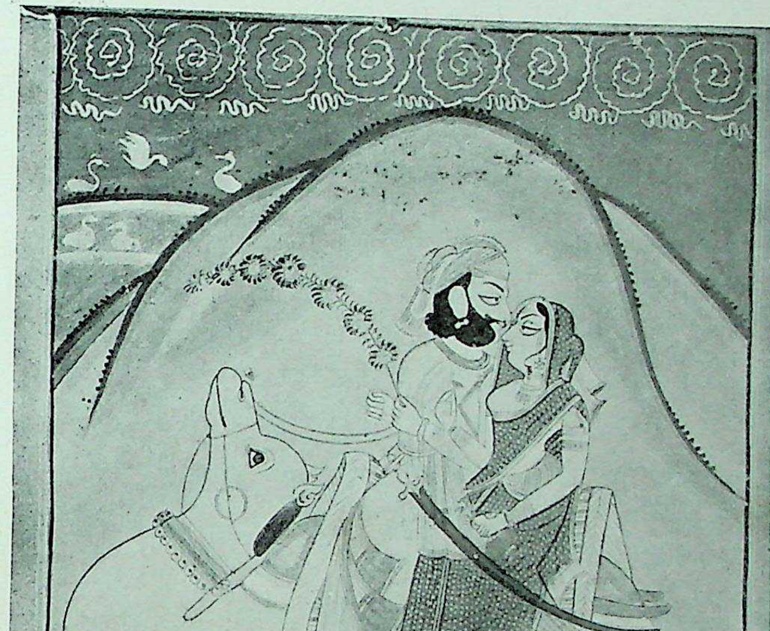


Fig. 24. Elopement of Dola-Maru, p. 69.

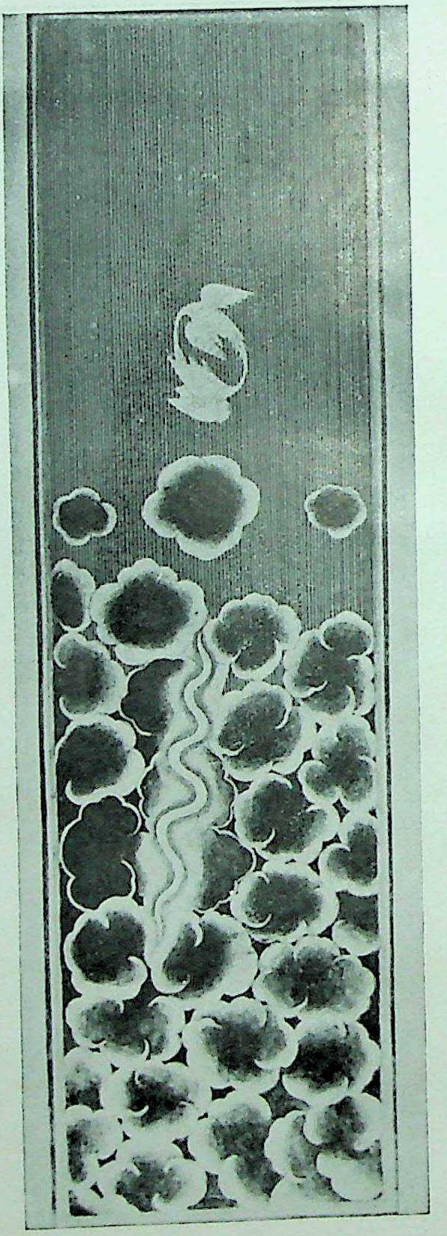


Fig. 25. Clouds, Lightning &
Circling Cranes,
Fresco, Bikaner, p. 70.

deserts. Though occurring in a Chinese Fresco the motif is doubtless of Indian origin. Here of course, the cranes are flying separately assiduously drinking up the drop of rain from the clouds above. In the last picture they are in close embrace as a circling couple of *cātaka-mithuna.* The clouds are in schematic forms of embroidered patches strung together in an oval shape. The lightning inside the bosom of clouds is actually depicted by a series of entwined snakes—literally translating the imagery of the literary texts which describe the lightning as a snake-form. As a literary parallel to this painting we can cite the description of a storm in the Fifth Act in Sudraka's *Mrcchakatika* (the Clay-Cart) where the poet refers to "the paired flamingoes,male and mate together" :

"When lightening's lamp is lit, and silver river
Impetuous falls from out of the cloudy womb—
Like severd lace, from heaven-cloaking gloom
It gleams an instant, then is gone for ever
Like paired flamingoes, male and mate together,
Like mighty pinnacles that tower on high."

In another miniature, an early Rajasthani picture (C. 17th century) the descending lines of rain are rendered in the forms of thin rows of festoons of pearls placed at regular intervals. This peculiar convention is supported by very old poetic conventions which compare the continuous drops of rain to the hoarded pearls of Indra coming down from the black clouds which resemble the black cloak of Baladeva. Thus a ninth century poem describes the falling strings of rain in the following verses :

"In streams as pure as thoughts to good men given
But merciless as darts that Arjuna hurls,
And black as Baladeva's cloak, the heaven
Seems to pour out all Indra's hoarded pearl."

*(Śakrasya mauktika-nidhāna-mibod-gīrantaḥ)*

Here the thirsty bird assiduously drinking the rain-drops is a peacock instead of a *cātaka*. Just above the peacock at the extreme edge in a streak of lightning is the usual snaky form.

In a distinguished masterpiece painted in Rajasthani *qalam*, illustrating the *swayaṃ-dūta-nayikā* (Fig. 26) we have a magnificent view of a distant Landscape stretching over an undulating piece of ground which is crowned by a group of trees decorated with descending shoots of plants with two playful monkeys riding on the branches watched by a pair of antelopes in a startled and static pose—an astonishing cameo of natural scene rendered with intense lyrical flavour, which is enhanced and not obliterated by the architectural setting of a two-storied building with a tower, painted in the foreground. Though devised as an appropriate background for an episode of love, the Landscape has an independent beauty of its own which we can taste and enjoy for its own sake ignoring the actions and movements of the actors of the love-drama depicted in the group of four human figures in the foreground.

In another masterpiece of the Rajasthani School illustrating the Todi Rāgini (Govt. Art Gallery, Calcutta) (several times reproduced) we have a delightful presentation of a rocky Landscape studded with strings of trees with a lake at the centre beyond which we get a glimpse of a distant city fringed with hills and trees. In the foreground we have the inevitable lotus-lake with zig-zag edges painted with a lot of realism and lyrical flavour. In this manner of presentation there is no schematic pattern and formula but a charming realistic rendering of a scene actually visualized with a lot of lyrical charm. The group of antelopes add a romantic element to this attractive picture of a sylvan Landscape.

Most of the Rāgini miniatures of the Rajput School present very attractive Landscape backgrounds to the visual interpretation of the Musical melodies.

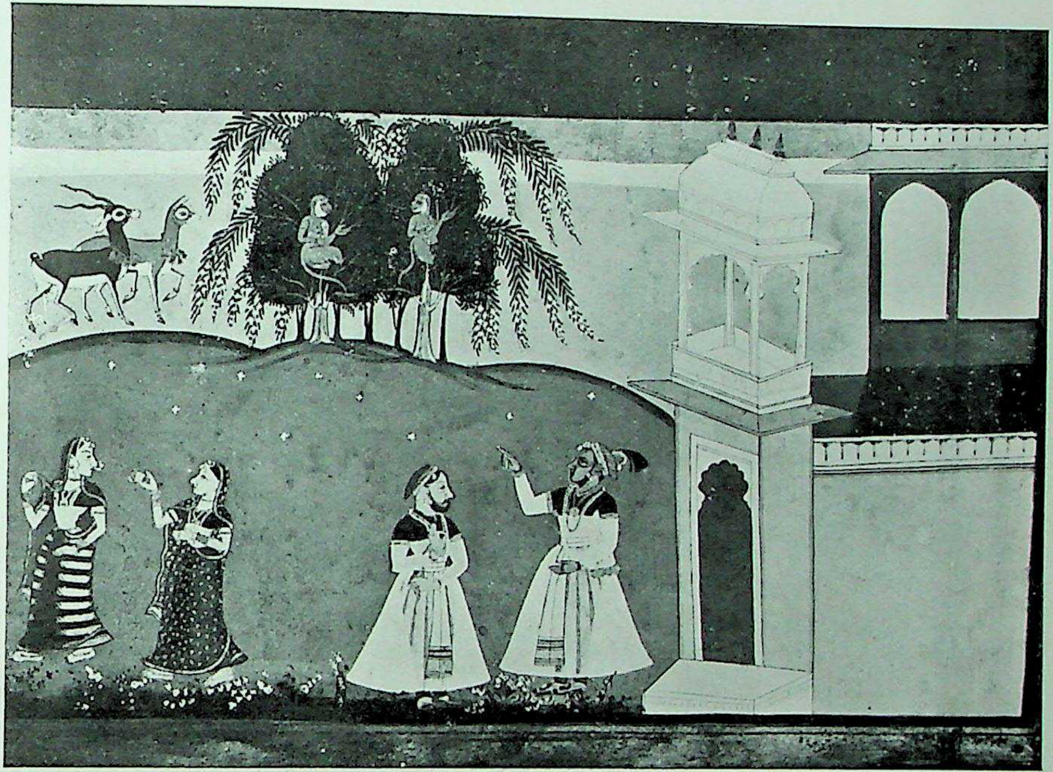


Fig. 26. Lover his Own Messenger, (Swayam-data-Nayak), p. 72.

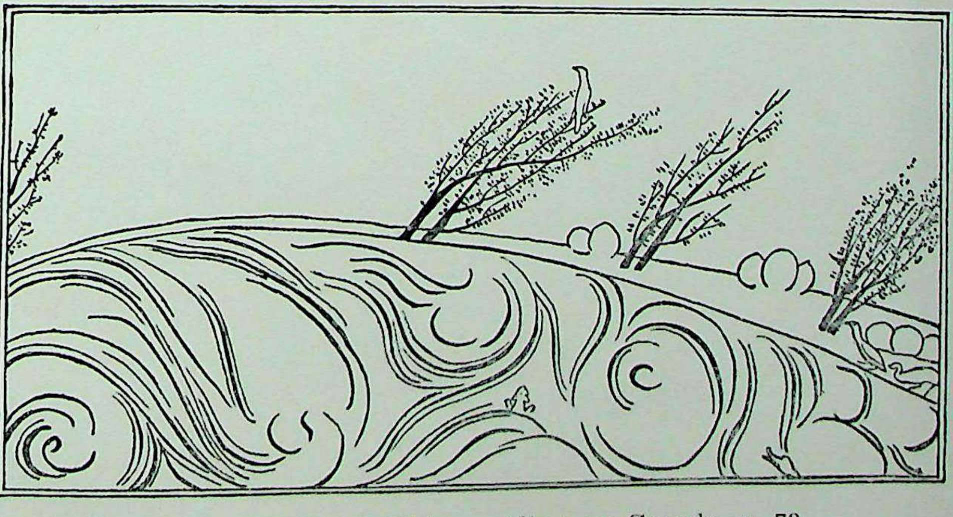


Fig. 27. Lord Vishnu riding on Garuda, p. 73.
Skeleton drawing, omitting figures.

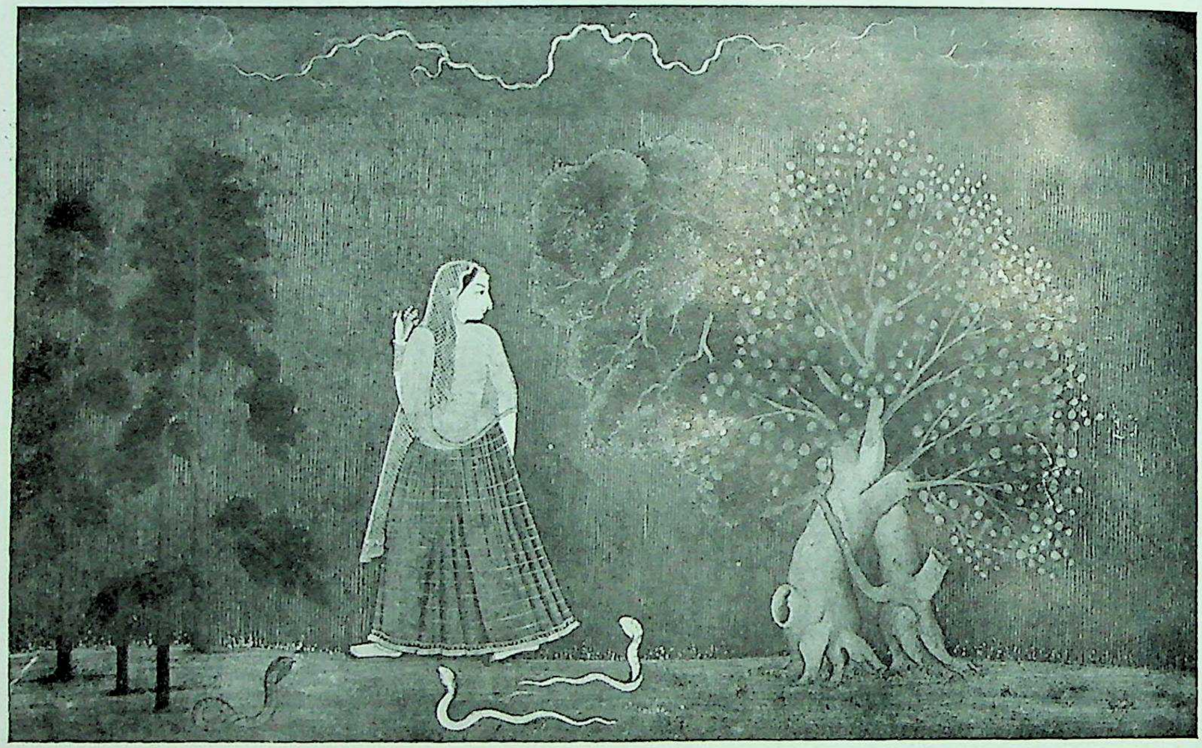


Fig. 28. Krishna-Abhisarika, p. 73.

We will close our study of Rajasthani Landscape by analysing a magnificent masterpiece illustrating a *pauranik* topic which depicts Lord Vishnu riding on his Garuda (Fig. 27). Seated on his aeroplane he rushed at a terrific speed to rescue the Elephant who had cried out for his help, attacked by a crocodile in the Puskar Lake. The headlong ride over the lake creates a great commotion in the air which descends on the lake raising agitation and whirlpool in the waters below and bends the trunks of the trees on the bank threatening to bring them down to the levels of the earth. The effect of the hurricane created by the aerial flight is skilfully suggested by the bending angles of the series of parallel trees extremely agitated by force of the stormy wind.

When the artists of the plains of Rajputana migrated to the Hill States of the Punjab Himalayas to build the different branches of the Hill School or *Pāhāḍi* painting at Jammu, Basholi, Chamba, and the Kangra Valley, a new naturalistic element was introduced into Landscape painting based on acutal studies of the beautiful natural sceneries surrounding the valleys of the lower Himalayan regions. So that we now come to a series of Pahari paintings of the Kangra School of refreshing charm and beauty.

Different types of Nayikas described in the rhetorical texts of our old *rasa-śāstra* (Canons of Erotics) provide . opportunity to artists to devise appropriate Landscape-settings, to interpret the emotional motive of each type of Nāyikā on various episodes of love-making. In a fine masterpiece in the Boston Museum, we have the picture of a *Krishna Abhisārika* going out alone in the dark night to meet her beloved at the trysting place (Fig 28). She is terrified at every step—sometimes treading on a serpent, sometimes looking back startled at strange sounds and calling up imaginative ghosts and goblins starting out from the cavities of trees. It is a stormy night and the streaks of lightning pierce the inky darkness of the skies now and then to provide a weird light which not only illuminates her fluttering cloak but also reveals the dark forms of ominous owls sitting on the top branches of the trees faintly visible in the alternate flashes of the lightning—a weird and ominous Landscape, but an appropriate setting for terrified lover hurrying to her trysting-place.

The same subject is treated in another miniature with consummate restraint and dignity. The thin irregular curves of the lightning are picked out against the dark slate of the sky providing a soft light not too bright but enough to help us to discern the many details of the Landscape—the big tree with every leaf and shining out with great beauty like a cluster of stars. There are two more trees in front of the lady depicted in ghostly, shadowy forms but just visible in the momentary flash of the lightning. The lady looks back in terror to see if anybody is following her but finds none except two springing snakes which she had just missed treading on. It is a delicate piece of Landscape, painted with subtle grades of tones and undertones which reveal but do not obliterate the many significant details of a scene charged with the emotion of an agitated lover anxiously marching to meet her beloved. We are reminded of the classical passage of Kālidāsa :—

*Taḍit-prabhā-darśita-mārga bhūmayaḥ*
*Prayānti rāgād-abhisārikā striyaḥ.*

'The *abhisārikā* lovers, burning with passion, are treading on the path made visible by the flashes of lightning.'

In the series of pictures illustrating the *Krishna-līlā* which represent the finest phase of Kangra Painting—we have several Landscapes painted as background for the various episodes—interpreting the love-adventures of Krishna and the Gopīs. In a well-known *Dān-līlā* scene, if we ignore the group of figures in the foreground we find an extensive Landscape has been painted at the back of these figures, visible in three stages,—first, we have a lotus-lake or perhaps the river Yamuna, then, a long stretch of undulating plateaus—each emphasized by a series of trees indicated by dots, and, thirdly, we have a distant view of a city with its series of shining white-washed building. The spreading branch of the large tree at the back of the wall occupies a large part of the sky dominating the whole Landscape.

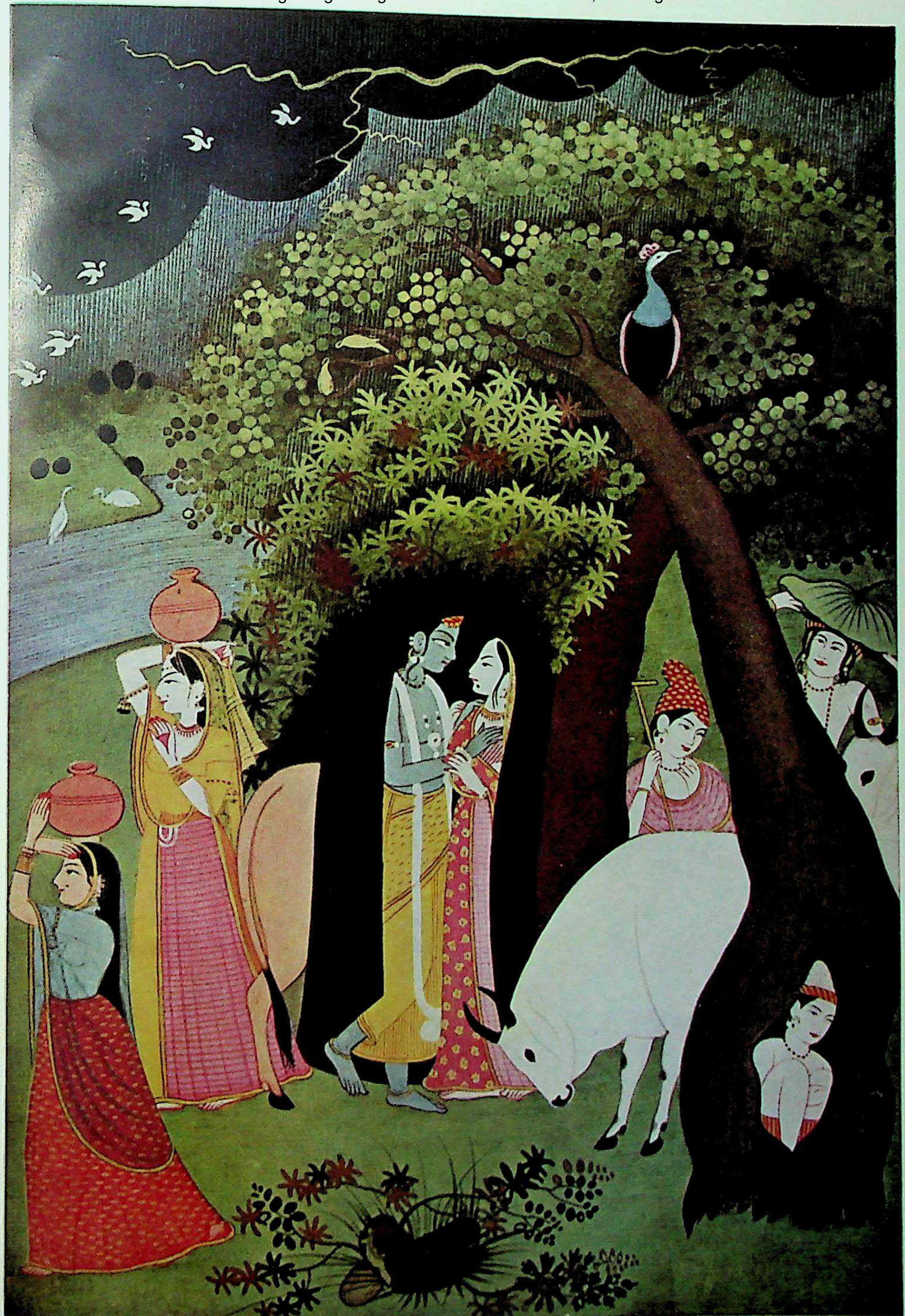
In another Rādhā-Krishna subject the picturesque forests of Vrindāvan are visualized with lot of lyrieal details delineating groves, plants, and patches of flowers, which, here and there brighten up the dark shadows of the groves with birds sitting on the branches which add poetic touches to the pretty piece of Landscape. Through the vacant spaces of the tree—a distant city is visible and beyond that we are shown a compact mass of white clouds shining out against the blue sky above.

Another Kangra Miniature (Gangoly : Masterpieees of Rajput Painting, Plate 33) offers a magnificent Himalayan Landscape of epic grandeur and significance painted as an appropriate and effective baekground to the illustration of a Śaiva legend. It is the mystic story of Shiva relating to Pārvati—the Secrets of Immortality. It took 12 years to relate, and, in the meantime Parvati fell asleep with her head comfortably poised on his thigh. But we are not concerned here with the details of the story. We have to analyse the composition of the Landscape, and its lyrical beauty. The story requires a secluded spot carefully guarded from intruders as we see here by a series of carefully depicted trees drawn in oval shapes nestling each other in closely knit embraces providing a solid wall of green verdure. Shiva's traident standing erect planted just near the head of the sleeping lady, has a flying pinion which flutters in the wind pointing towards the celestial *Māna-Sarovara* gleaming in the distance. and teeming with lotuses. The lake is overhung by undulating hills studded with green patches suggesting the forms of trees on the flanks of the distant hillocks. The upper part of the picture gives us an independent piece of Landscape of much beauty and lyrical charm.

Another great masterpiece of the Kangra School provides a vivid presentation of a Rainy Landscape painted as an effective and dramatic background to a "Radha-Krishna" theme known as "Varṣā-Vihāra" or Enjoyment in Rain. (Colour Plate) At the upper edge of the picture we have a series of hanging clouds indicated in a series of curves which are crossed by a long stretch of lightning drawn in rhythmic wavy lines. The rains pour down from the clouds in thick compact series of lines attracting a row of flamingoes which soar up into the skies to drink the rain-drops as they descend from the clouds. The thick showers immediately wash up the faces of the leaves which shine up in bright clusters. refresnened by the rains offering an ornamental halo round the peacock perching on the top of the trunk of the tree. The fat form of the trunk of the tree offers a cavity in which a cowherd boy has sought a safe refuge. In the foreground is a cluster of blossoming plants radiating from a piece of black pebble which seems to be animated by the twigs which move easily and violently, lashed by the hard gale.

We can parallel the many detaile of this charming landscape—by citing a group of verses composed by an anonymous poet :

*Nita cātaka cāaason vola karai*
*Muravānka sora suhāvana hai*
*Camakai capalā cahun cāo caḍhī*
*Ghana ghora ghaṭā varsāvama hai*
*Palakau pāpihā na raho cupa hai*
*Mili payāri piyā lapaṭai chatiyān*
*Sukhako sara-sāvana Sāvana hai.*



वर्षा-विहार। বর্ষা-বিহার।

Most of the miniatures of the Pahari School of Painting offer beautiful glimpses of tiny little landscapes as effective and significant backgrounds for the stories illustrated by them.

There now remaine to refer to and cite an unique specimen of a large painting from Nepal—which illustrates a romantic landscāpe with some super-natural elements required by the nature of the subject-matter. It is the well known episode of the *Krishna-līlā*—the 'Rescue of the Elephant' attacked and entangled by a crocodile when it had descended into a lake for a bath. (Fig 33) The scene is divided into three compartments by undulating boundary lines. In the first compartment given in a triangular shape is placed a couple of gods who have come down from heaven in their aerial boats riding on ihe shoulders of clouds. The upper regions of the skies are suggested by the empty space at the corner through which several birds are seen flying about in delightful freedom in the expansive space. An ornamental tree rears its head touching the boundary line of the sky and intercepting by its foliage a large part of the sky. The actual drama is delineated in the central compartment which depicts the Elephant in distress, wallowing in the lake, its legs enchained by the crocodile. Krishna has just arrived flying on his Garuda to the delight of the elephant which greets its rescuer with a lotus offering. At the lower compartment is a rock screen depicted in undulating lines which provide the edges and boundaries of the little lake Besides the lotuses inside the lake there are small trees here and there to suggest the lyrical atmosphere of a Himalayan landscape. At the lower corner there is a couple of gods seated, facing each other raising hands in elation at the sight of the Rescue of the Elephant, a romantic subject treated romantically in the appropriate setting of a piece of super-natural landscape of intense beauty and spiritual charm.

Our last example is also a specimen from Nepal. (Fig. 32) It is a beautiful piece of copper sculpture illustrating the "Descent of the Brahma-putra". The Himalayan Hill through the channels of which the River glides and descends on the earth are depicted quite realistically by a series of peaks closely placed side by side giving an impressive view of a chain of hillocks. Down the base of these rows of mounds flow the water of the river in strong currents building now and then rhythmic waves which are symbolized in the picturesque forms of water-nymphs, or Bramha-putris symbolized "daughters of the River-goddess"—who stand up in captivating poses or flow down the current—riding on the waves—with great elation and joy.

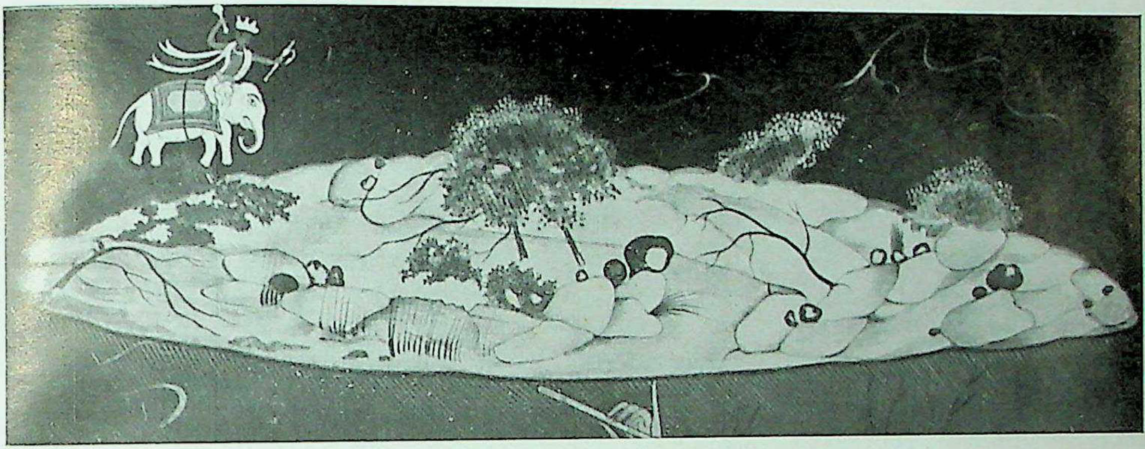


Fig. 29. Indra Deluging Vrindavan.

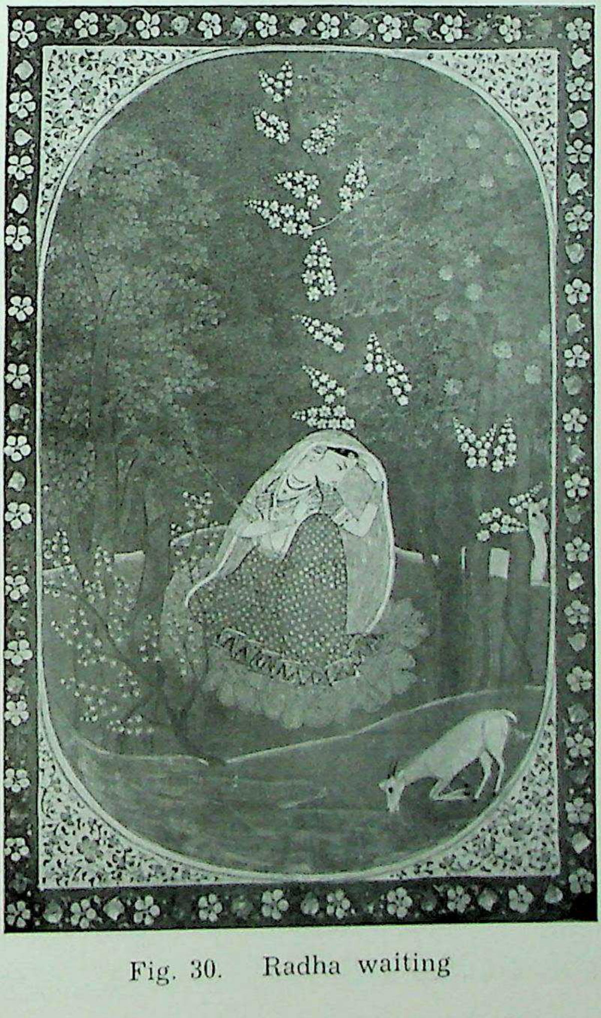


Fig. 30. Radha waiting

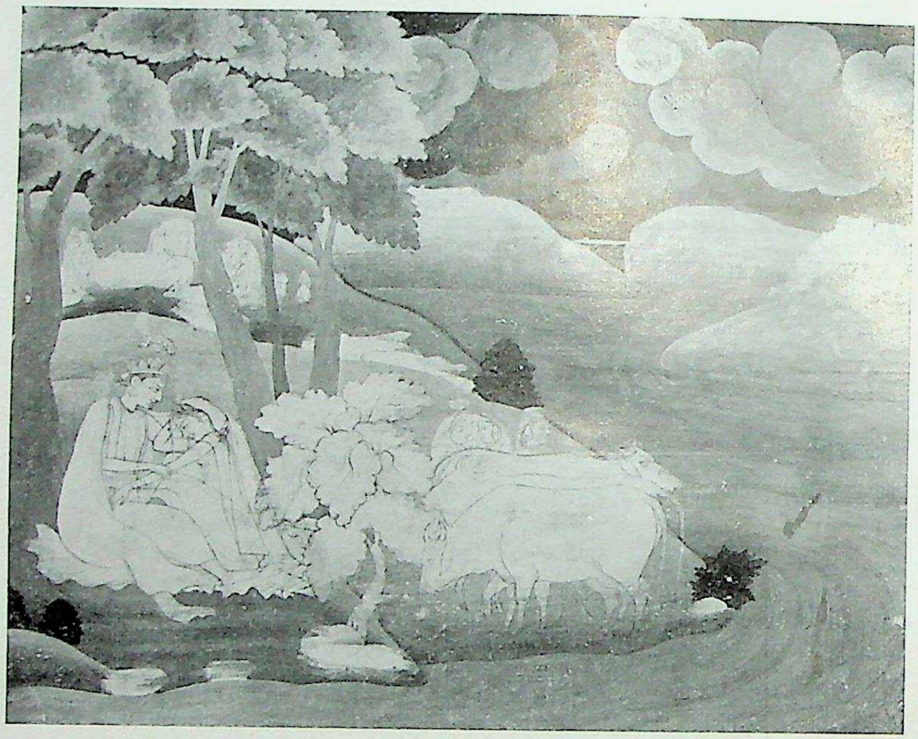


Fig. 31. Radha and Krishna (approaching storm).

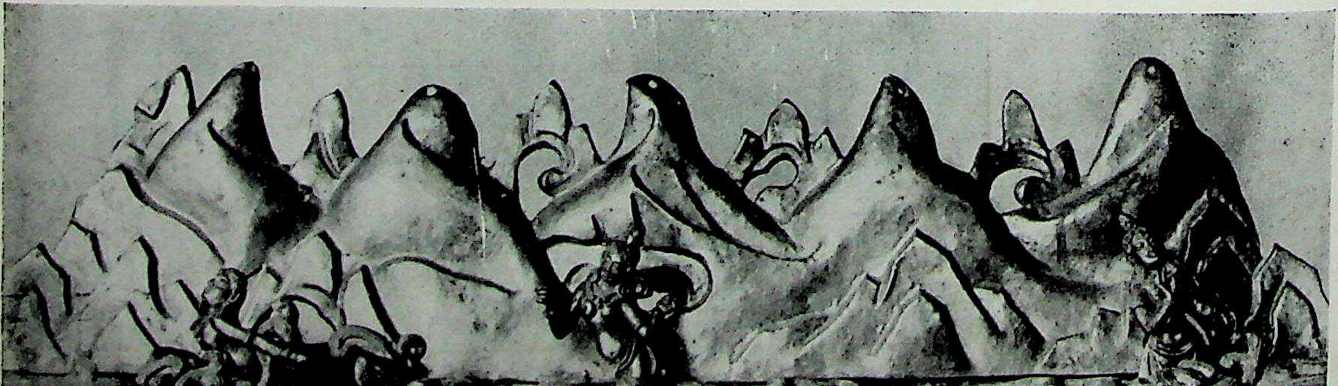


Fig. 32. Descent of the Brahmaputra (Nepal), p. 78.

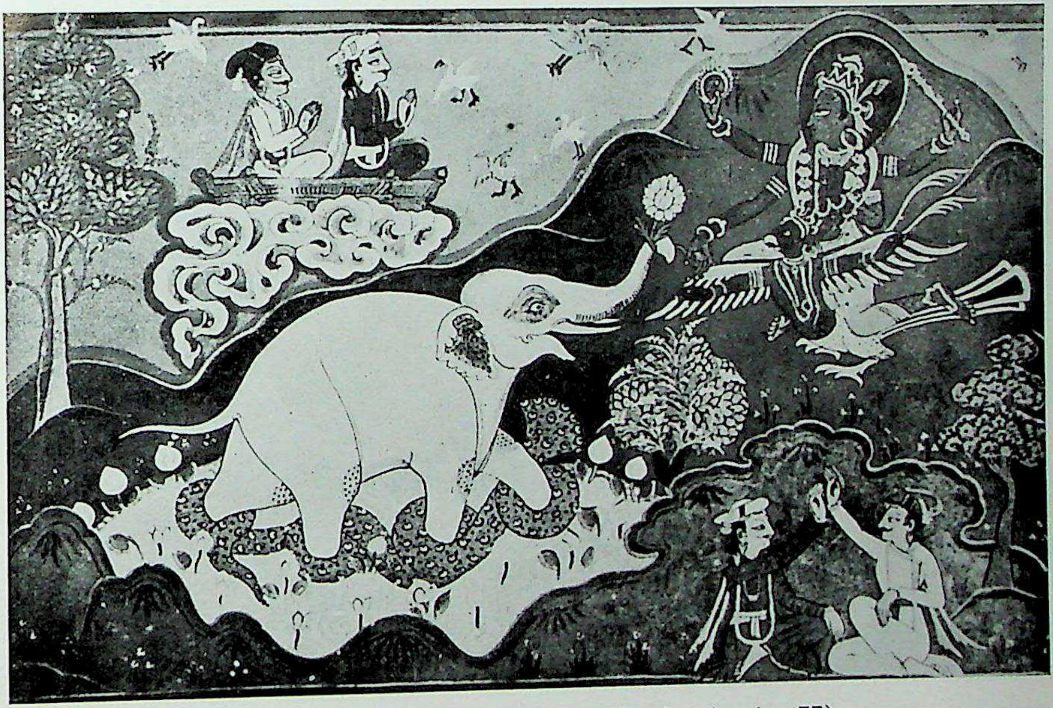


Fig. 33. Rescue of the Elephant (p. 77).

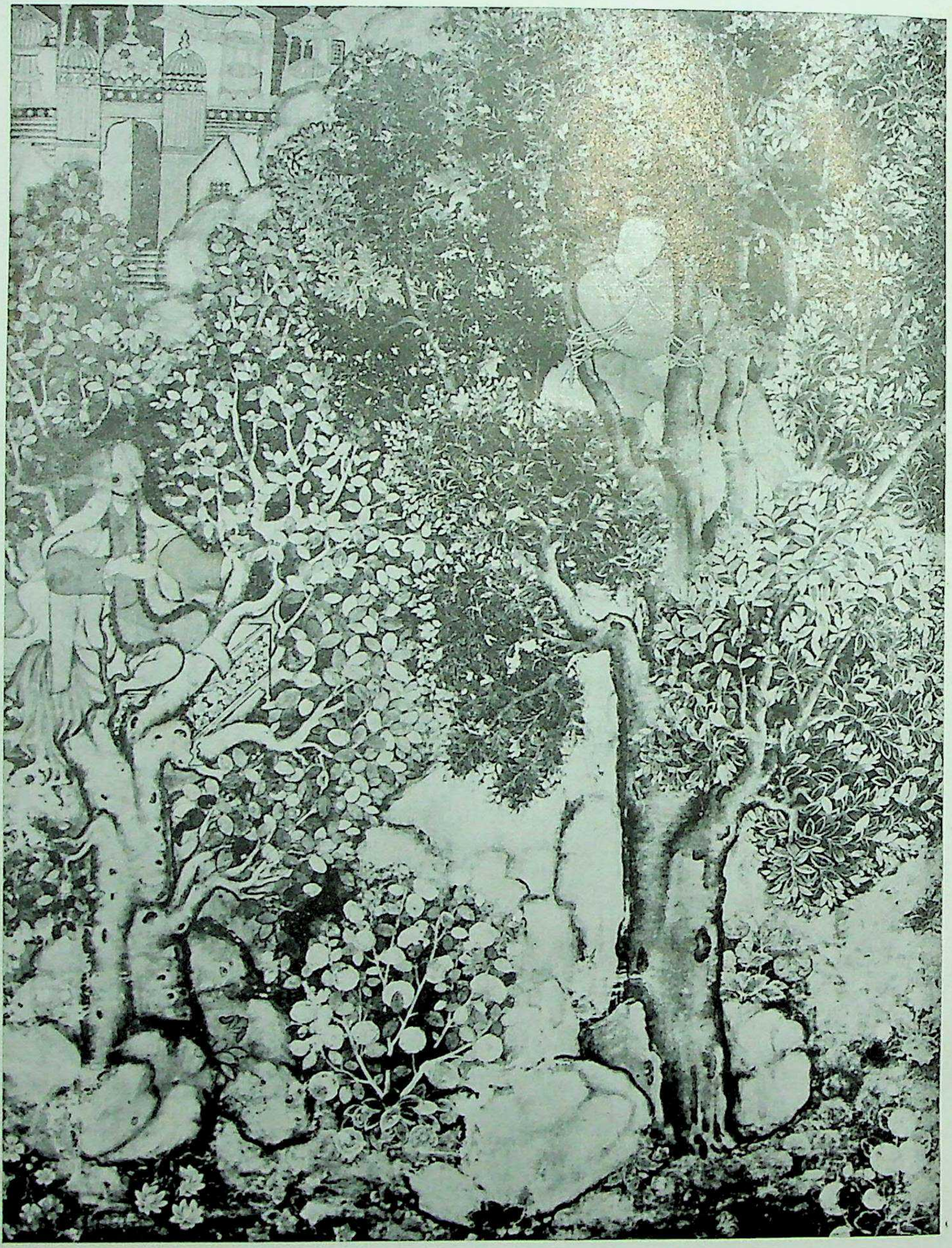


Fig. 34. A page from Hamzanamah.

## MOGHUL SCHOOL

We are unable to devote much space to the adequate discussion of the rich contribution to Landscape by Moghul artists. In the large-scale illustrations to the *Hamza-namah*, the *magnum opus* of Moghul painting, commenced by Humayun (c. 1555-56) and completed by Akbar after 1570 A. D. we have numerous presentations of Indian landscape based on actual study of sights and scenes—, the rich panorama of which continue to unfold before the talented artists of the Moghul courts. (Figs. 34,35) A group of artists always accompanied the emperors in their numerous hunting expeditions, their long marches and processions on the road-ways and river-ways. The hundreds of military expeditions, sieges, and long warfares also afforded to the artists travelling with the royal camps valuable opportunity to study the infinite variety of Indian landscapes in all parts of the extensive empire. And the Durbar artists have faithfully recorded innumerable varieties of nature-scenes in the hundreds of miniatures they painted to record their daily experiences of life around them, as glorious settings to the numerous royal adventures, the details of the landscape background with their multifarious pictures of trees, meadows, flowerbeds forests, rocks mountains and hills studded with infinite variety of details meticulously set down with skilful realism and photographic accuracy. The Moghul artists' photographic records, however valuable as accurate visual presentations, lack the romance and emotive significance of Rajput nature-pieces.

In the brilliant & vivid miniatures of the *Akbarnamah* we have several masterpieces of Indian landscape which have been frequently reproduced and are too famillar to students of Indian Painting.

Though a few elements of treatment of trees and rocks are borrowed from artifices and conventions of Persian painting, as a rule, Moghul Landscape-painting is based on accurate study of actual scenes and they therefore lack the imaginative conventions of Persian traditions.

Prince Daniel's exhortation to the Court painters to depict "What we have ourselves seen and heard" offers a Key-note to the prosaic presentations of Indian landscape without very much imaginative distortion in rendering the familiar sights of nature.

To the dominant realistic note, Jahangir introduced an accurate rendering of space, and perspective based on the imitative study of European nature-scenes which foreign ambassadors presented to Jahangir who immediately called upon his court-artists to study these scientific aids to correctly visualize nature by the rules of perspective and the gradations of space and distance.

As Percy Brown has elaborately discussed the topic in his worthy monograph *Indian Painting under the Moghuls* (Oxford, 1924) it is unnecessary to go into the matter over again.

In addition to landscape, Jahangir's painters made a rich contribution to the study of flowers many of which are of extraordinary charm and beauty.

The Landscapes of the time of Jahangir and of Shah Jahan distinguished themselves by the *finesse* and delicacy of execution, and by the precision of study. In the expert 'wash' melt the rosy tint, the azure and the sky-gray ; a mist which covers and hides the horizon, looks almost European, one may say ; the Iranian silhouette of rocks which it gives in contours. The water loses, in its turn the spirals and the tresses. It is indicated sufficiently by a few cleverly done *washes*.

The types of Indian trees, affecting the Akbar School, are replaced by Occidental Models. The efforts of the court-painters

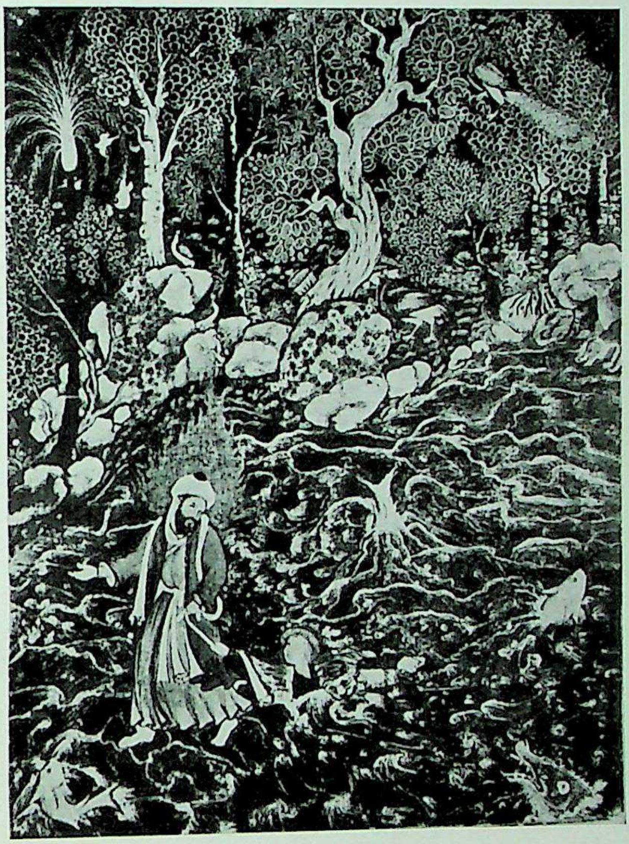


Fig. 35. Prophet Elia, (Hamzanamah)

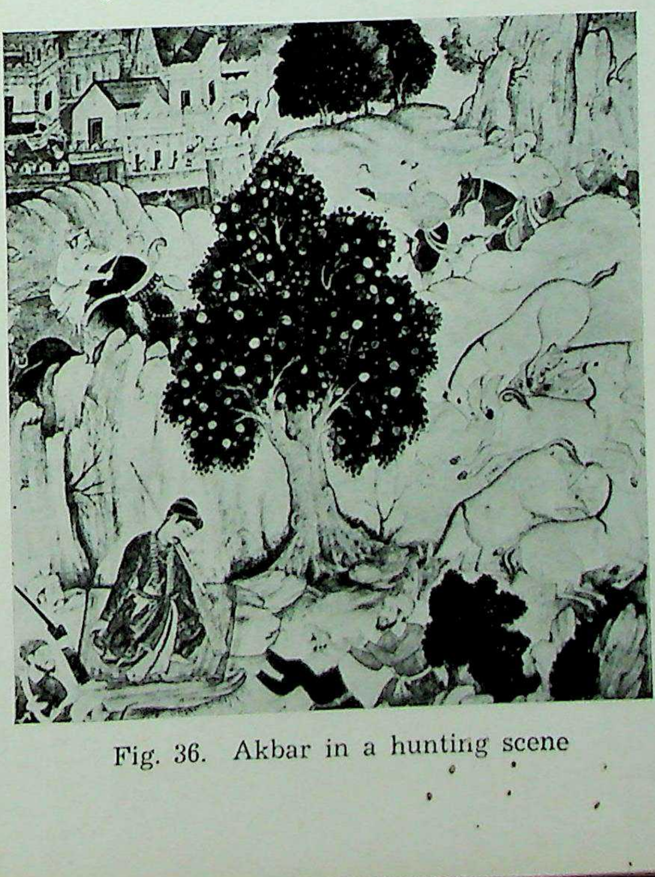


Fig. 36. Akbar in a hunting scene

tended to the rendering of the volume of leaves by an opposition of tonalities of light and shade," as also by sectioning, or superposed surfaces, a process borrowed from the painters and, above all, from the engravers of Europe. After centuries of history, Indian Art, for the first time, tackled the problem of the "Open air". That *genre* of painting, really, was not cultivated by the Moghul painters, except for a relatively restricted period ; the exotic flowers, of western landscape, could not succeed in accomodating themselves on the Indian soil. But its brief efflorescence had, all the same, a notable influence on the manner of representing Nature, in the later Indian Schools of painting.

It was in the Moghul studio that was reawakened the feeling for Nature, in-born to Indian artists, but which was obstructed by the load of tradition which filled the landscapes. In the back-ground of the paintings of the Jahangir School and of Shah Jahan, the landscapes with their modest dimensions, remain, nevertheless, exquisite.

May we cite, for example, that one can attribute to Monohor the work representing 'Jahangir encircled by his courtiers.' The entire surface being filled with personages and architecture, the landscape occupies but an insignificant corner in the *tableau*. One sees the rocks the hills, the cloudy sky, a tree extending its barren branches in the void, (as with the 'Italian primitives') all bathed in transparent atmosphere. That "Open air issue" continues to exist under Shah Jahan. We notice it on the Portraits left by the Master Balchand, of the 3 young sons of the Emperor. The landscape occupies the upper part of the painting. A twilight sky, animated by clouds radiate the peace of the countryside, down below. Far away was the city, half asleep, under greenery, the rocks reflecting the rosy tint of the sky, the trees designing their sombre outline and the fine tracing of their dead branches, yielding a sensation of Infinity.

It is curious to notice that the horizon-line placed, before, very high, now is much lowered under the western influence, in a manner permitting the sky which, (till then formed only a narrow band) occupies a large part of the picture. The bases of Moghul painting of the epoch, are frequently nothing but copies of European landscape.

Sensitive to the beauty of the landscape, Jahangir responded also to the grace of a flower or to the majestic silhouette of a tree. To illustrate the chronicle of his reign, he ordered the painting of numerous pictures of the Indian *flora*. Master Mansur alone executed more than 100 designs of different plants.

In spite of such favourable conditions, the Landscape, as a special *genre*, could not of itself develop, neither under Jahangir nor under his successors ; but it only conserved the same character of a *decor*, as under Akbar, at the beginning of the School.

But even if it could not succeed in developing itself with the amplitude of Moghul art of the 17th century, the manner of treatment underwent considerable changes. While the reactions to the later Persian manners introduced by the Moghul Emperors gave birth to a new School of Landscape painting, which developed novel manner of realism, romantic and decorative, rather than wholly naturalistic or scientific except for the passing phase in the Jahangir School.

If we now make an attempt to analyse and critically appraise the values of Indian Landscape Art, we find that the rendering of the Appearances of Nature for its own sake was hardly ever the aim of the old Indian Artists. In old Indian Art—Landscape is always a background for human or divine actors. There is no such philosophic interpretations of nature as we recognize in Chinese repre-

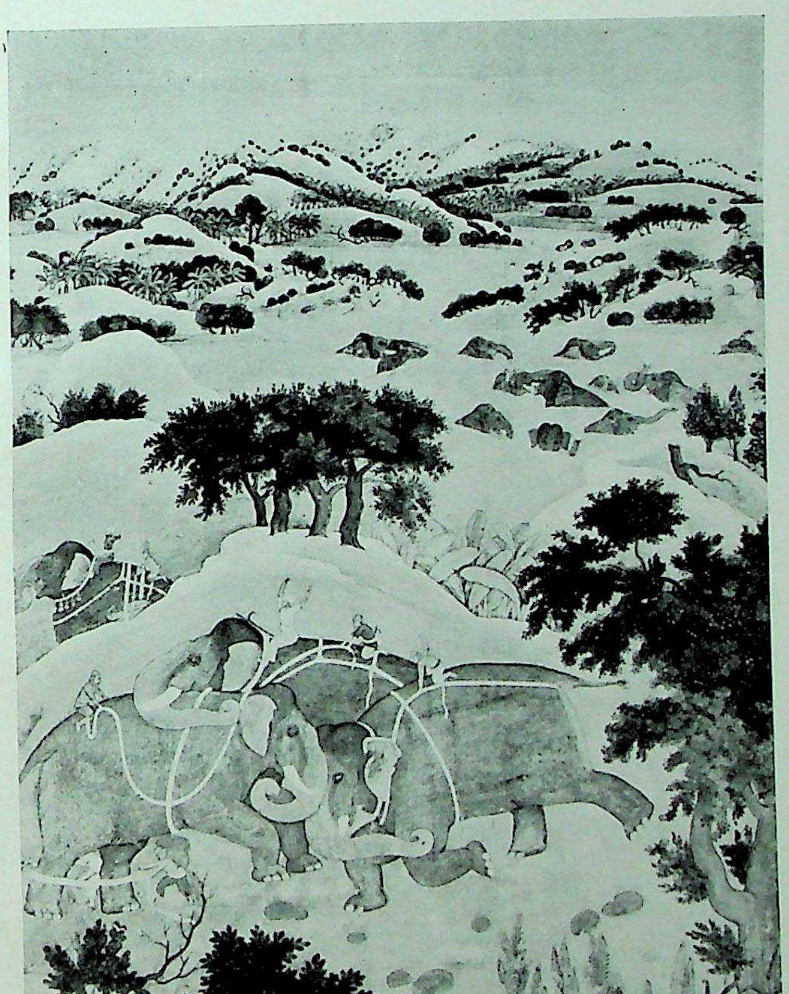


Fig. 37. Elephant Hunt

sentations of Mists and Mountains, in the symbols of Tiger and Dragon. In Indian Mediaeval Painting, the relation of man and woman is interpreted as a spiritual unity and in expounding and interpreting this relationship, surrounding circumstances, the background of Nature, is resorted to in order to call up the appropriate emotive essence, the rasa-value, the *ethos*, the spirit and character of the drama of human or divine love which has to be set forth in its proper and relative setting, in its necessary environmental atmosphere, and it is this interpretative background that the Indian Landscapes provide for their pictorial themes.

From another point of view, from a very early time the educated man in India was brought into intimate relationship with the sights and sounds of Nature around him due to the old ideals and culture of the Forests Dwellers, the Āranyakas, of the Rishis and Sages who plumbed the depths of the secrets of life in their forest-huts. The life that was lived in these Forest Hermitages helped to demolish man's aloofness from Plants and Creepers, from Birds and Beasts, from Sun and Rain. Thus it was that they could realize their own life by connecting it with the vaster life of Nature around them. To them, their environment was not dead or vacuous, detached, or insignificant, but the necessary context of their life.

This provides the correct clue to the real motive and significance of Indian Landscape Art.

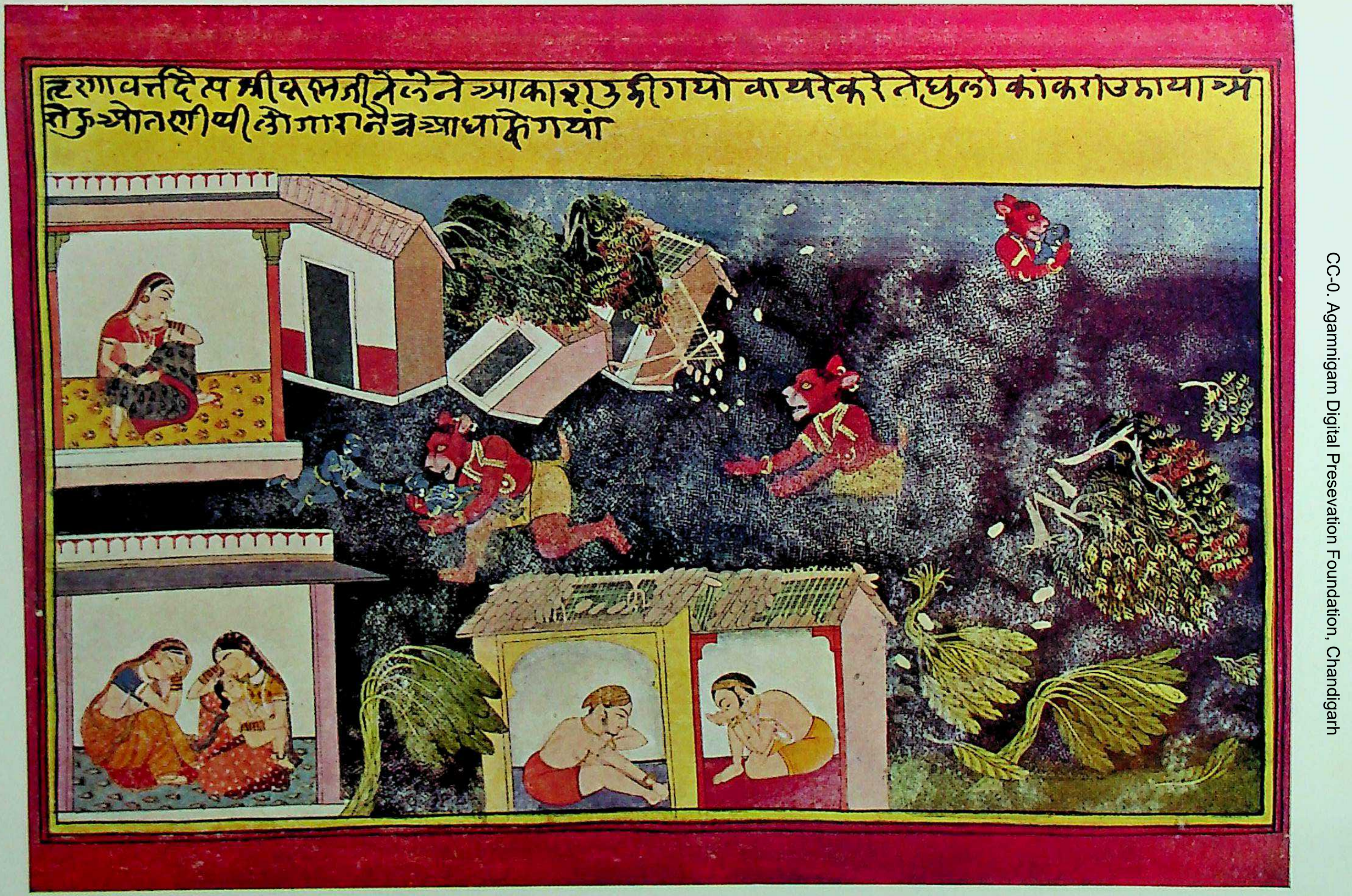
## OUR COLOUR PLATES

### *Colour Plate I.*

**TRINĀVARTA SAMHĀR,** (quelling of Trināvarta) We have here a remarkably realistic representation of the well-known episode of the līlā of Sri Krisna (*Srimad Bhāgavata*, 10th skanda) in which the Demon Trināvarta attempted to carry away Infant Krisna, but his attempt was foiled by the God who raised a tumultuous dust-storm which blinded the demon who failed to carry out his nefarious design. There is a caption, in Hindi, on the top of the picture which describes the episode :

*Trinavarta daitya Sri* Krisna*-jīnee lene ākāsara* (?)
*Udīgayo vaya re karene dhulo kankaro udāyā*
*Āun-ro-hu-so taranī pyī logāra netra andhā ke gayān.*

"The demon Trināvarta-picking up Krishneji flew-up into the sky. The winds created a storm of dusts and pebbles in consequence of which every body's eyes were blinded'. Not only is the tumultous dust-storm rendered with a realism and grandeur but the movements of the demon are depicted with dramatic vigour and accuracy showing the three stages, the last one bringing back the infant to the room of Yasodā seated in dire distress. The effect of the storm on the plants and trees, and the huts and buildings and their roof is vividly narrated with astonishing realism.


त्रणावर्त दैस श्रीकृस्नजी नै लेने आकास उडीगयो वायरे करे नै धुलो कांकरा उडाया अं
धेरो हुओ तरणी पीलो गारा नै त्र आधा होगयां

THE QUELLING OF THE DEMON TRINAVARTA
(From a Private Collection)

Prabasi Press, Calcutta-9

*Colour Plate II.*

VARṢĀ-VIHĀRA (Enjoyment in Rain). This large miniature of the Kangra School offers a remarkable representation of a piece of rainy landscape which provides an appropriate background to the meeting of Radha and Krishna in intimate love-embrace under the cover of a black cloak. The upper part of the picture depicts in glowing colours the different shades of green of the rainwashed leaves of the tree on which sits a pea-cock elated by the refreshing shower. At the top we notice the hanging forms of black clouds embroidered with wavy streaks of lightning and with a garland of flying cranes. An the details of the landscape in rain weave a significant background to the saturated emotional essence of the love-episode. The scene is depicted in a couple of Hindi verses (too long to quote at length) which can be paraphrased in the following words:—

"The cuckoo every minute shrieks sweetly out of joy. The voice of the pea-cock is no less sweet. The lightning flashes from all the four quarters. And the thick black clouds have started pouring. The voice of the hawk-cuckoo for a moment is not still. And the gales from all quarters rush in stormy steps. The Lover and the Beloved with their bosoms to bosom do meet. Sāvana (i. e. July) is the month which soaks all up and makes happiness more happy".

Never have the sights and sounds of Nature been so vividly depicted with such lyrical intensity.

*Colour III.*

'BIRDS IN AN WOODLAND' PIECE, depicted in a miniature of the Deccan School,—offer an unique example of pure landscape—without any human figures, woven out of two rows of upright trees standing on the edges of a rivulet. The monotonous feeling of the upright trunks of the rows of trees—is softened by the introduction of a variety of birds, in a variety of poses—peacocks, cranes and playful ducks which impart an intensely lively feeling to the inanimate landscape—to which the rich foliages contribute not a little to the intricate composition. This landscape-piece is intended to convey the sense of desolation—of Damayanti—abandoned by King Nala under the evil influence of the stars, poignantly described in the well known classical Legend of the Loves of Ṅala and Damayanti repeated in various versions in various texts. This picture is borrowed from the MS., of a Hindi version of *Nala-Daman.*, dated 1698 A. D., in the collection of the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.

# APPENDIX I

## Letter from Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy to the Author.

Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston, Mass-9.

May 6, 1940.

I do not think you will find much on "Landscape" before the Ramayana and early *Kavya*. There is something to be found in Pali (*Thera* and *Theri-gāthā*) and this has been remarked upon by Mrs. Rhys Davids. Compare references to parks and gardens (*Uyyāna*). I have not made a collection of such references.

A. K. Coomaraswamy.

# APPENDIX II

## TRADITIONS OF LANDSCAPE IN IRANIAN ART

Extract from Prof. J. STRZYGOWSKI'S article

*Les Elements Proprement Asiatiques Dans L'Art.*

(Revue Des Arts Asiatiques, Tome VI (1929-30/, pp. 31-32)

"We know, for long, this Asiatic rococo. The most startling exemplar of a veritable rococo, it is the Tamamushi casket preserved in the ancient Japanese temple Horiyuji. I reproduce one of its panels (Plate VIII-c), it represents a Buddhist ceremony. At a first glance we seem to have the demonstration (to the left) of the grace-notes of the purest rococo. Really speaking, it was a typical Iranian landscape. We may furnish multiple analogies from the art of the Far East and of India. We do not see the slightest trace of realism in the building up of the landscape ; it is essentially artificial. In the same way, as in European rococo, the plants seem to take the asymmetric and ordered volutes while others are climbing. If we were not sure of having dated the casket about 600 A.D., and if it were not pronouncedly Buddistic, we could have believed that it came from 18th century Europe.

With this document, we hold one of the principal forms of the Mazdaic art—the landscape. If the Greek and Indian art served themselves with human forms borrowed from the South, Iranian Art took recourse to landscape which seems to have relations with those of the Indo-Aryans. An argument more or less in favour of this opinion is the discovery, in South Russia, of a silver cup found in the Kurgan de Maikop, a district of Kuban, and, apparently belonging to 3rd century B. C. At the base of the vase (Fig. 2), when one began carving designs, we noticed a mountain scene often modelled on the Chinese ceramic vases of the early epoch.

The peak alternates with the pass of the mounts followed by the conifer plants devoured by the bear. From that mountain descends the caterpillar-like ribbon, or a row of fish descending towards a circle under the base of the vase. One could believe the scene to be rivers gushing out of a common basin. Whatever meaning one may give to that landscape (Cancacus with Tigris and the Euphrates ? ) it relates in any case, to a scene which can only assume its proper value by the animals roving on the high chain of mounts and in the base of the basin.

The landscape is typical of the posterier epoch of Iranian style, not only because, it does not imitate Nature in realism, but to hold her in security—as it were (reminding us of the landscape of the Tamamushi casket) ; and also above all—because it presents a religious trait like the Japanese scene. It is not important to us to know what was the Northern religion which played its part in the Maikop vase, but the religious character of the landscape manifests itself, thanks—to the motif of "circumambulation" which represented the animals in two series. We might have doubted this if it had not lateron been the decisive characteristic of the Northern landscape, in general, and of the Iranian art in particular"

(Translation by the courtesy of Dr. Kali Das Nag).

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